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Wonderful Tales from Denmark

Hans Christian Andersen

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Hans Andersen's

WONDERFUL

TALES

FROM

DENMARK.

Published by C. S Francis & Co., New York

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WONDERFUL TALES

FROM

DENMARK.

BY

HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN

A New Translation.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

NEW YORK:
C. S. FRANCIS & CO., 252 BROADWAY.
BOSTON:
J. H. FRANCIS, 128 WASHINGTON STREET.
1852.

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Contents.

PART I.

Dedication - - - - - - - - - - - - 7
Preface - - - - - - - - - - - - 9
Ole Luckioe—The Story Teller - - - - - - 15
The Buckwheat - - - - - - - - - 40
The Wild Swans - - - - - - - - - - 45
The Angel - - - - - - - - - - - 81
The Fellow-Traveler - - - - - - - - - 88
The Elfin Mound - - - - - - - - - 130
The Flying Trunk - - - - - - - - - 145
The Bundle of Matches - - - - - - - - 150

PART II.

The Ugly Duck - - - - - - - - - - 7
Top and Ball - - - - - - - - - - 31
The Little Mermaid - - - - - - - - 37
The Storks - - - - - - - - - - - 92
The Nightingale - - - - - - - - - 104
The Rose Elf - - - - - - - - - - 127
Holger Danske - - - - - - - - - - 139
The Emperor Frederic Barbarossa - - - - 150
The Dying Child - - - - - - - - - 159

PART III.

Little Ellie - - - - - - - - - - - 7
The Tinder-Box - - - - - - - - - - 34
The Wicked King - - - - - - - - - 53
The Resolute Leaden Soldier - - - - - 60
The Garden of Paradise - - - - - - - 71
The Shepherdess and the Chimney-Sweep - - - 105
Little Ida's Flowers - - - - - - - - 117
The Daisy - - - - - - - - - - - 136
New Year's Eve - - - - - - - - - - 146

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Part X.

The Cuckoo,

AND OTHER TALES.

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TO MISS MITFORD.

My dear Miss Mitford,

You will not, I dare say, have forgotten the tales I read to you, when sitting comfortably by your fire-side some weeks ago. As you were so delighted with the few you then heard, and expressed yourself so favorably of the translation, it gives me great pleasure to be able to present you now with the complete collection. I trust you will receive it kindly, and as a token that the pleasant fifteenth of October is well remembered by me.

How glad should I be if, as on that evening, I could read them to you myself, and again enjoy with you the humor and pathos of these charming tales.

Believe me,

My dear Miss Mitford,

Very truly yours,

CHARLES BONER.

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Preface.

To the Young Readers of these Tales.

MY DEAR LITTLE FRIENDS,

THE task of translating this volume into English was to me as a labor of love; for when I read these charming stories for the first time the thought immediately occurred to me, "How delightful a book would this be for English children to have! How many persons would be enchanted with the book if they could but read it!" And so, wishing that others—many others, as I hope—might share my pleasure with me, wishing that the name of Andersen

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might become as familiar and be as joyfully greeted in England as it is everywhere throughout Denmark, I thought the best thing I could do would be to translate what he has here written; and then I doubted not of finding some bookseller who would take my book and publish it. Well, I set about the work; and at every pretty passage I thought to myself, how some bright, playful eyes would sparkle still more brightly, and some sweet rosy mouth send forth a happy laugh, when the words I was then writing would be read: and so I translated story after story, and was as impatient to get on as though I had not read the book before, and wanted to know myself what was coming. Then I took them with me to England, and read them to different persons,—the young, and those who had been young,—and all were equally delighted with the pretty descrip-

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tions, the beautiful thoughts, the quaint drollery, and the kindly feeling to be found throughout. For these stories though, it is true, not all strictly speaking fairy-tales, yet seem to me to come from Fairy-land; for they have the strange witchery about them that when a child reads he sees just such pictures as delight his young fancy; and when a grown-up person takes them in his hand he is equally delighted, though he sees them quite differently to the child, for to him there are hidden meanings and deep wisdom in what appears to some a mere childish tale. It may seem very magical for a thing to appear quite different to two persons at the same time, and yet remain unchanged; but so it is. As a proof of this, the lady to whom I have taken the liberty of dedicating my little book wrote to me some time ago: "I look forward with great interest to the publica-

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tion of that charming book, which I shall enjoy quite as much as if I were one of your legitimate readers of eight years old, instead of fifty-eight next Tuesday:" so you see that not only the school-boy but one whose genius has delighted thousands, can read them with enjoyment. However, I suppose this is because the good and the gentle-natured, be their age what it may, are all children in heart; taking delight in the same simple things, and moved like most of yourselves by the expression of natural feeling. At Copenhagen, too, these tales are read in the theatre to the audience between the acts; so great and so general is the interest they excite.

How Andersen could imagine such charming things I cannot tell, nor do I know if the elves and pixies of Denmark gave him a hint or not; but I should think the beautiful thoughts and words so full of pathos

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were brought him rather by some good angel, a messenger from heaven.

A friend of mine, Count Pocci, of Munich, (you all know where Munich is?), told me if I could find a publisher, he would make the drawings for the book. I was particularly glad of this, because he has already illustrated a great many such works: tales of his own, about little orphan children being left all alone in the world, without any being but God to take care of them; and pretty verses of four or five lines for every day in the month; besides the books of other authors: and they were all done in the feeling and spirit I liked.

Here, in Bavaria, I can assure you,

"All children know,
They know and love him well;
And clap their hands with joy to hear
The tales that he can tell.

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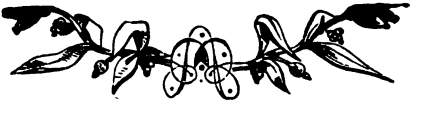
"And in the men he draws for them,
And in his tales, is shown
Full well he knows that childhood has
A world that's all its own."

But it is really time to end. I intended to say a few words only, and I have stayed to talk with you for more than half an hour. Farewell, my pretty ones; and like the children in the vignette, plucking fruits and flowers from the overhanging boughs, may you derive gladness and much amusement from these "Tales from Denmark."

Farewell for a time: I hope some day to meet you all again.

CHARLES BONER.



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Ole Luckoie.

DID you ever see any body who knows so many stories as good old Ole Lucköie—and then, too, *such* stories!—Yes, of an evening, although the children be sitting never so nicely and prettily behaved at table, or on their footstools,

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up stairs Ole Luckoïe comes quite softly. He has, in reality, list shoes on; he opens the door very gently, and then what should he do but strew a certain powder on the children's eyelids. It is so fine, so very fine; but still it is always enough to make it impossible for them to keep their eyes open any longer; and that is the reason they do not see him: then he glides behind them, and breathes gently on their neck; and then their heads feel so heavy! But it does not hurt them, for good old Ole Luckoïe loves the children, and wishes them well; he only wants them to be quiet, and they are most so when they are in bed. He wants them to be still, that he may be able to tell them his stories.*

* Ole Luckoïe, that is, "old kind-hearted Ole," is he whose business it is in every family to close the children's eyes when they go to bed—in short, to sing them their lullaby. In Germany the same nursery-genius is to be found: he is called "The Sandman," who, when it is time for the little ones to go to bed, strews sand in their eyes, so that they can no longer keep them open. It is an every-day expression, when

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Ole Lukoie.

As soon as the children are asleep, good old Ole seats himself at the foot of their bed. He is well dressed; his coat is of silken stuff; but to say what color it is would be an impossibility, for it is so glossy, and is green, and red, and blue, according as he turns. Under each arm he carries an umbrella; one with pictures, which he holds over the good children, and then they dream the whole night the prettiest stories; and one on which there is nothing, and this one he holds over naughty children, who then sleep on dully the whole night, and when they awake in the morning have dreamed nothing at all.

Let us hear now how Ole came every night for a whole week to a little boy called Hialmar, and what he related to him. That makes seven stories; for a week, you know, has seven days.

of an evening a person looks sleepy, and winks and rubs his eyes, to say, "Ha, ha! I see the Sandman is come!"—NOTE OF THE TRANSLATOR.

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Ole Luckoie.

MONDAY.

"Now, then, listen to me!" said the kind old man, when he had got Hialmar to bed. "Now I'll show you a pretty sight!" and suddenly all the flowers in the flower-pots were changed into great trees, that spread their long branches up to the very ceiling, and along the walls, so that the whole room looked like the prettiest bower; and all the boughs were full of flowers, and every flower was more beautiful than a rose, and smelt delightfully. If one chose to eat it, it tasted sweeter than sugar-plums. The fruits shone like gold; and plum-cakes were then almost bursting with raisins: there was nothing could be compared to it! But at the same moment a terrible lamentation was heard in the table-drawer, where Hialmar's school-books were lying.

"What's that?" said Ole, going to the drawer and pulling it out. There lay the slate, on which the figures were pushing and knocking each other; for a wrong number had got into the sum, so that the whole was

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on the point of breaking down: the pencil jumped and hopped about, chained as he was to the slate by a piece of string, just like a little dog: he wanted to help the sum, but was not able. And a little further lay Hialmar's copy-book: here, too, was a moaning and lamentation within. On every leaf, from top to bottom, were capital letters, each with a small one beside it, and so all the way down. That was the copy; and by these some other letters were standing, that fancied they looked like them. Hialmar had written these; but there they lay, pretty much as if they had tumbled over the pencil-line on which they were meant to stand.

"Look! you must stand so!" said the copy; "look!—so, sideways, with a bold front."

"Oh! we should be glad enough to do so," said Hialmar's letters, "but we can't; we are such poor wretched creatures!"

"Then you must have some pepper," said Ole.

"Oh, no!" they all cried, and stood so

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upright that it was a pleasure to look at them.

"Well, I can't tell you any more stories now," said the kind old man; "I must go and drill the letters: one, two! one, two! one, two!" And then they stood as straight and as well as only a copy can stand; but when Ole went away, and Hialmar looked at them next morning, there they were all just as wretched-looking as before.

TUESDAY.

As soon as Hialmar was in bed, Ole touched all the furniture in the room with his magic wand, and it immediately began to speak; and each thing spoke of itself.

Over the chest of drawers there hung a large picture in a gilded frame. It was a landscape; and in it were to be seen high old trees, flowers in the grass, and a broad piece of water, with a river that flowed round the wood, past many castles, away into the mighty sea.

The kind old man touched the picture

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with his wand; and the birds began to sing, the boughs of the trees moved, and the clouds floated by, so that one could see their shadows moving over the landscape. Ole now lifted Hialmar up to the frame, and Hialmar put his feet in the picture, right in among the high grass, and there he stood. He ran to the water and seated himself in a little boat; it was painted red and white, the sails shone like silver, and six swans, with golden chains around their necks, and a brilliant blue star on their heads, drew the boat past a green wood, where the trees related stories of robbers and witches, and the flowers told about the pretty little elves, and about what the butterflies had said to them.

The most beautiful fishes, with scales like gold and silver, swam after the boat; sometimes they gave a jump, so that they made a splashing in the water; and birds, red and blue, large and small, came flying behind in two long rows; the gnats danced, and the chafers hummed; they all would accompany Hialmar, and each one had a story to tell.

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That was an excursion! Sometimes the woods were thick and gloomy; now they were like the most pleasing gardens, full of flowers and sunshine, and there were two large castles of marble and crystal. On the balconies Princesses were standing, all of whom were quite little girls, acquaintances of Hialmar, with whom he had often played. They stretched out their hands, each one holding the nicest little sucking-pig imaginable, made of sugar; and Hialmar took hold of one end as he sailed by, and a Princess held the other; so that each got a piece —she the smaller, and he the larger one. Before each castle little Princes were standing sentry; they shouldered arms with their golden swords, and sent down showers of raisins and games of soldiers. They were the right sort of Princes! Hialmar now sailed through a wood, now through large halls, or the middle of a town; he passed, too, through the town where his nurse lived, she who had carried him about when he was quite a little boy, and had loved him so dearly. She nodded and beckoned to him,

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and sang the pretty verse which she had composed herself and had sent to Hialmar:

"I think of thee, my darling, I think of thee, my joy,
At morning and at evening, my little prattling boy;
For I it was who treasured the first words which thy tongue
In infancy did utter, and on thy accents hung.
'Twas I who kissed thy forehead, 'twas I who kissed thy ckeek
So rosy and so dimpled, when thou didst try to speak;
And I have rocked thy cradle, and sung thy lullaby,
And watch'd till thine eyes opened, as blue as the blue sky.
And so thou wast a part of my life and of my joy!
No! ne'er shall I forget thee, my darling, darling boy!"

And all the birds sang, too, the flowers danced on their stems, and the old trees bowed their heads, while the kind-hearted old man told his story.

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WEDNESDAY.

Well, to be sure! How the rain is pouring down without! Hialmar could hear it even in his sleep; and when Ole opened the window the water reached to the very sill; it was quite a lake: but the most magnificent ship lay just before the house.

"Will you sail with me, little Hialmar?" said Ole; "if you will, you can go and visit foreign countries with me to-night, and be here again in the morning."

And all at once there stood Hialmar in his Sunday clothes on the deck of the splendid ship; and it grew beautiful weather immediately, and they sailed through the streets, and round about by the church, and the whole place was now a large wild sea. They sailed on so long till at last no land was to be seen, and they perceived a flight of storks coming from Hialmar's home, and going to warmer climes. They always flew one behind the other, and they had already flown so very, very far! One of them was

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so tired, that his wings could scarcely carry him further; he was the last of all, and he soon remained a great way behind. At last, with outspread wings, he sank lower and lower, beat the air a few times with his pinions, but in vain. His wings touched the rigging of the ship, he slipped down from the sail, and, plump!—there he stood on the deck!

Upon this a sailor-boy took him and put him into a hen-coop with the poultry, along with the ducks and turkeys. The poor stork stood among them quite out of countenance.

"Only look, what an odd sort of fellow that is!" said all the cocks and hens. And the turkey-cock puffed himself up as much as he could, and asked him who he was. And the ducks walked backwards, and nodded to each other.

And the stork told them of sultry Africa, of the pyramids, and of the ostrich that races over the desert like a wild horse. But the ducks did not understand him, and again nodded their heads, and said one to another,

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"Shall we not agree that he is a simpleton?"

"Yes, to be sure, he is a simpleton," said the turkey-cock, gobbling.

So the stork was silent, and thought of his dear Africa.

"Those are very pretty thin legs of yours," said the turkey; "pray, what do they cost a yard?"

"Quack! quack! quack!" giggled all the ducks; but the stork did as if he had not heard them.

"Oh, you might very well have laughed, too," said the turkey to the stork, "for the joke was a good one. But perhaps it was not high enough for you! Ha! ha! ha! he is a shallow fellow, so let us not waste our words upon him, but keep our clever things for ourselves!" And then he gobbled, and the ducks gabbled, "quack! quack! quack!" It was really laughable to see how amused they were.

But Hialmar went to the hen-coop, and called the stork, who hopped out to him on the deck. He had now rested, and it seem-

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ed as if he nodded to Hialmar to thank him; then he spread out his wings and flew away to warm lands; but the fowls clucked, the ducks gabbled, and the turkey grew as red as fire.

"We'll make soup of you to-morrow," said Hialmar; and saying these words he awoke, and was lying in his own little bed. That was a strange journey that Ole had taken him in the night!

THURSDAY.

"What do you think?" said Ole; "but don't be afraid: I'll show you a little mouse." And he held out his hand to him with the pretty little creature. "She is come to invite you to a wedding. There are here two little mice that are to be married this evening. They live under the floor of your larder; and they say it is a wondrous charming residence!"

"But how can I get through the little mouse-hole?" asked Hialmar.

"Leave that to me," said the old man:

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"I'll take care to make you small enough." And he touched Hialmar with his wand, and he grew smaller and smaller immediately, till at last he was not bigger than a finger. "Now, then, you can put on the little leaden soldier's clothes; I think they'll fit you, and it looks so well to have on uniform when one is in company."

"Very well," said Hialmar; and in the same moment he was dressed like the nicest little leaden soldier.

"If you will have the goodness to take a seat in your mamma's thimble," said the little mouse, "I will do myself the honor to draw you."

"Oh, your ladyship surely won't take the trouble yourself!" said Hialmar, and on they drove to the wedding.

First they came into a long gallery under the floor, that was just high enough to drive through with the thimble, and was lighted the whole way with touchwood, which shone in the dark brilliantly.

"Does it not smell deliciously here?" said the mouse that drew him along; "the

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whole corridor has been rubbed with bacon-rind—there can be nothing nicer!"

Now they came into the hall where was the bridal pair. On the right stood the lady mice, who whispered as if they were amusing themselves at the others' expense; and on the left stood the gentlemen mice, stroking their whiskers with their paws; and in the middle of the room one beheld the marriage pair, standing in a hollow cheese; and they kissed each other before every body, for they were betrothed and were just going to be married. More and more company came; the mice almost trampled each other to death, and the two whose wedding was to be celebrated stationed themselves right in the door-way, so that there was no going in or out. The whole room, like the corridor, had been rubbed with bacon-rind; this was all the refreshment they got; but as dessert, a pea was shown, in which a little mouse of the family had bitten the names of the wedding pair; that is to say, the initials only. It was beautiful beyond all description.

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All the mice said the wedding was very grand, and that the conversation, too, had been very good.

Now Hialmar drove home again. He had, it is true, been in very high society; but he had been obliged to bend, and creep, and make himself very small, and put on a leaden soldier's uniform.

FRIDAY.

"It is incredible what a quantity of old people are always wanting to have me," said Ole Luckoie; "particularly those who have done something wicked! 'Good, dear Ole Luckoie,' say they to me, 'we cannot close our eyes; and we lie the whole night, and see all our misdeeds, that sit like little ugly goblins at the foot of the bed, and sprinkle us with hot water. Do come and drive them away, that we may get a little sound sleep!' And then they heave deep sighs. 'We will willingly pay you:—good night, Ole; the money lies on the window-

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sill!' But I don't do it for money," said the old man.

"What shall we undertake to-night?" said Hialmar.

"Why, I don't know if you would like to go to a wedding: it is quite a different sort of one to yesterday's. Your sister's large doll, that looks like a man, and is called Herman, is to marry the doll Bertha; besides, it is her birthday; so many presents will arrive."

"Yes, I know," said Hialmar; "every time the doll wants new clothes, my sister says it is her birth-day, or her wedding. That has happened a hundred times already for certain."

"Yes, but to-night is the wedding for the hundred-and-first time; and after it has happened a hundred and one times, then all is over. This time, therefore, it will be unparalleled: only look!"

And Hialmar looked on the table. There stood the little pasteboard baby-house, with lights in the windows, and before the door were all the leaden soldiers presenting arms;

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the wedding pair were sitting on the floor, leaning thoughtfully against the leg of the table. Then Ole Lucköie put on grandmamma's black gown, and married them. When the wedding was over, all the furniture in the room began singing the following song, which the lead-pencil had written for the occasion:

"Ho, for the bridegroom! and ho, for the bride
That's standing beside him in beauty's pride!
Her skin it is made of a white kid-glove,
And on her he looks with an eye of love.
Joy to the husband, and joy to the wife,
And happiness, too, and a long, long life!"

And then presents were made them; but no eatables were given: this they had themselves desired; for they had quite enough with love.

"Shall we go into the country now, or make a tour abroad?" asked the bridegroom; and the swallow, who was a great traveller, and the old hen in the court that had brooded six times, were called in to give their advice; and the swallow related about

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the beautiful warm countries where large and clustering grapes hang on the vines, where the air is mild, and where the mountains have tints that are here unknown.

"But you have not our green cabbages there," said the Hen. "I passed one summer in the country with all my young family: there was a sandpit there, in which we could go and scratch; besides that, we were allowed to be in a garden full of green cabbages. Oh, how green it was! I cannot imagine any thing more lovely!"

"But one cabbage-head looks just like the other," said the Swallow; "and then here you have so often bad weather."

"One is accustomed to it," said the Hen.

"But it is cold here, it freezes!"

"That is good for the cabbage," said the Hen. "Besides it can be warm here, too. Had we not four years ago a summer that lasted five weeks? It was so hot that one could hardly breathe. Moreover, here are none of the poisonous animals that are found abroad. Here we have no robbers! He must be a blockhead that does not think our

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country the finest in the world! Such a one does not deserve to live in it!" And at these words tears ran down the Hen's cheeks. "I have travelled, too! I have travelled in a hamper more than twelve miles. There is no such great pleasure in travelling that I can see!"

"Yes, the Hen is a sensible person," said the Doll Bertha. "I have no great wish to travel over mountains either; for that is nothing else but going up and then coming down again. No, we will take a trip to the sand-pit, and go walking in the cabbage-garden."

And so the matter was settled.

SATURDAY.

"Am I to hear a story?" said little Hialmar, as soon as the good-natured Ole had got him to sleep.

"We have no time this evening," said Ole, spreading out his handsomest umbrella over him. "Look at these Chinese!" And the large umbrella looked like a great china

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plate with blue trees and pointed bridges, full of little Chinese standing and nodding their heads.

"We must get the whole in order for to-morrow," said Ole Lucköie; "to-morrow is a holyday, it is Sunday. I must go up to the church-tower, to see if all the little church-sprites have polished the bells, that they may sound melodiously. I must away into the fields, to see if the winds have swept the dust from the grass and the leaves; I must take down all the stars and polish them. I take them all in my apron; but they must first be numbered, and the holes where they belong must be numbered, too, so that each may get his right place again, otherwise they would not fit tight; and we should have a quantity of falling stars if one after the other were to tumble down."

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Ole Lucköie," said an old Portrait, that hung on the wall near which Hialmar slept. "I am Hialmar's great-grandfather. I am very much obliged to you for telling the boy pretty stories, but you must not set his ideas in

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confusion. Stars cannot be taken down and polished. Stars are globes like our world, and that is the very best thing about them."

"Many thanks, old great-grandfather!" said Ole. "Very many thanks! You are, it is true, an old great-grandfather, but I am older than you. I am an old heathen; the Greeks and Romans named me the God of Dreams. I have been in the houses of the great, and still go there. I know how to deal with great and little! Now, then, do you tell a story!" And old Ole went away and took his umbrella with him.

"Now-a-days one dares not say what one thinks!" murmured the old Portrait.

And here Hialmar awoke.

SUNDAY.

"Good evening," said Ole; and Hialmar nodded, and ran quickly to the portrait of his great-grandfather, and turned it with the face to the wall, in order that it might not mix in the conversation as it did yesterday evening.

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"Now you must tell me a story about the five green peas that lived in a pea-shell, and about the cock that paid his addresses to the hen, and of the darning-needle that wanted to be very fine, and fancied itself a sewing-needle."

"One can have too much of a good thing," said Ole. "I will rather show you something. I will show you my brother; but he never comes but once; and when he does come to any body he takes him on his horse, and tells him stories. He knows only two; the one is indescribably beautiful, such as no one in the world can imagine; and the other is so horrible and frightful—I cannot say how dreadful!" And he lifted little Hialmar up to the window, and said: "There, look at my brother, the other Ole; he is, it is true, sometimes called Death! You see, he does not look half so horrid as he is made in picture-books, where he is all bones. All that is silver embroidery that he has on his dress! it is the richest hussar uniform! a cloak of black velvet flies behind him over his horse: look! how he gallops!"

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And Hialmar saw how Ole Luckõie's brother rode away, and took the young and the old up with him on his horse. Some he set before him, and others behind; but he always asked first what testimonials they had.

"Oh, good ones," said they all. "Yes, but let me look myself," said he; and then they were obliged to show him the book: and all those who had "VERY GOOD," or "PARTICULARLY GOOD," came before him on horseback, and heard the beautiful story; but those who had "PRETTY WELL," or "BAD," in their books, were obliged to get behind and hear the dreadful one. They trembled and cried, and wanted to jump down from the horse, but they could not, for they and the horse had grown together.

"But Death is the more beautiful of the two," said Hialmar; "I am not afraid of him."

"Nor should you be," said Ole; "only take care that you have a good certificate in your book."

"Yes, that is instructive," murmured the

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great-grandpapa's portrait; "it is, however, a good thing to express one's opinion after all;" and now the old gentleman was pleased.

Well, that is the story of Ole Luckoie, and this evening he can tell you some more tales.

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The Buckwheat.

IF, after a thunder-storm, you go into a field where Buckwheat is growing, you will sometimes see that it looks quite black and singed; just as if a stream of flame had passed over it: and then the farmer says, "The lightning has done this." But how is it that the lightning does it? I will tell you what the Sparrow told me, and the sparrow heard it from an old Willow-tree that stood in a field of

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Buckwheat, and is still standing there. It is a large and quite a venerable Willow, but old and wrinkled, and is cleft from top to bottom; and out of the clefts grow blackberry-bushes and grass. The tree bends forwards, and the branches almost reach the ground—it looks like long green hair hanging down. In all the fields around grain was growing: Rye, Buckwheat, and Oats. Yes, beautiful Oats, that look, when ripe, like a whole sea of little golden canaries sitting on a bough. The grain stood there in such blessed fulness; and the heavier it was the lower it bowed in pious humility.

A field of Buckwheat was there, too, and it lay just before the old Willow-tree. But the Buckwheat bowed not down as did the other grain; stiff and proud, there it stood.

"I am quite as rich as the ears of Corn," it said, "and, besides, I am much more beautiful: my flowers are as lovely as the blossom of the Apple-tree: it is quite a pleasure to look at me! Did you ever see any thing more splendid than we are, old Willow-tree?"

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And the Willow nodded as though he would say, "Yes, certainly I have." But the Buckwheat was puffed up with pride, and said, "The stupid tree! he is so old that grass is growing over his body!"

Now, a dreadful thunder-storm drew near; all the flowers of the field folded their leaves, or bowed their heads, while the tempest passed: but the Buckwheat, in his pride, stood quite erect.

"Bow thy head, as we do," said the Flowers.

"I shall do no such thing!" said the Buckwheat.

"Bow thy head, as we do," said the Corn; "the Spirit of the storm is about to rush by. He hath wings which reach from the clouds unto the earth; he will dash thee down before thou hast time to implore him to be merciful!"

"No, I will not bend," said the Buckwheat.

"Close thy flowers, and bend down thy leaves," said the old Willow-tree; "look not into the glare of the lightning when the

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cloud bursts: men even dare not do that; for in the lightning one seeth into God's own heaven, and THAT sight is enough to dazzle even man: how would it fare with us, mere plants of the earth, if we dared to do it? we are so much less!"

"So much less!" said the Buckwheat; "now just for that I *will* gaze into God's own heaven!" and he did do so in his pride and presumption. It was as if the whole world was in fire and flame, so terribly did it lighten.

Later, when the storm was over, there stood the Flowers and the Corn in the calm pure air refreshed by the rain; but the Buckwheat was burned by the lightning as black as a coal: it lay a dead useless plant upon the field.

And the old Willow moved its branches in the wind, and large drops fell from the green leaves, as though the tree wept. And the Sparrows asked: "What are you weeping for? It is so beautiful here! Look how the sun is shining; look how the clouds are sailing on! Do you not smell the fra-

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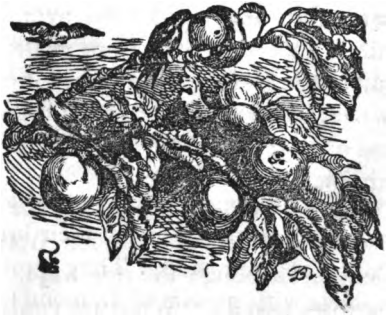
grance of the flowers and of the bushes? What are you weeping for, then, you old Willow?

And the Willow told them of the pride and presumption of the Buckwheat, and of the punishment that is sure to follow. I, who relate the story, heard it from the Sparrows: they told it me one evening when I begged for a fairy-tale.



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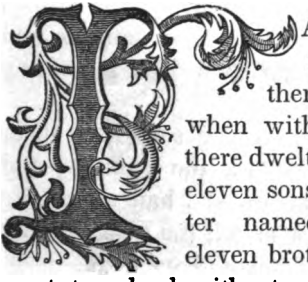
The Wild Swans.



FAR, far from here, in the land whither the swallows fly when with us it is winter, there dwelt a King, who had eleven sons, and one daughter named Elise. The eleven brothers, princes all, went to school with stars on their breast, and swords at their side. They wrote on golden tablets with pencils of diamond; and they could read in any book, and out of any book: you heard in a moment that they were Princes. Their sister Elise sat on a

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little stool of looking-glass, and had a picture-book that had cost half a kingdom.

What a happy life the children led! but it was not to last long.

Their father, the King of the whole country, married a wicked Queen, who treated the children very ill. On the very first day they felt the difference. There was a great festival at the palace, and the children played at visiting; but instead of having roasted apples and cakes, as formerly, the Queen gave them only sand in little saucers, and said, "they must fancy it was something good to eat."

The following week she sent little sister Elise to some peasants in the country; and it was not long before she had something bad of the Princes to tell the King, so that he no longer cared much about them.

"Be off! go into the world, and take care of yourselves!" said the wicked Queen. "Fly off in the shape of large dumb birds!" But yet she could not make it quite so bad as she wished; and into eleven beautiful white swans were the Princes changed.

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With a strange cry, they flew out of the windows of the palace, and disappeared over the park and the wood.

It was still very early in the morning when they passed by the place where Elise was lying asleep in the peasant's cottage. They flew in circles round the roof, turned their long necks here and there, and beat the air with their wings; but nobody heard or saw them, and they were obliged to continue their flight up into the clouds, and over the wide world. Then they flew to the great gloomy wood, which extended to the sea-shore.

Poor little Elise stood in the peasant's room, and played with a green leaf; for it was the only thing she had to play with. She made a hole in the leaf, and through it peeped at the sun; and it seemed to her as though she saw the bright eyes of her brothers; and as often as the warm sunbeams fell on her cheeks, she thought of her brothers' kisses.

Each day passed like the other. If the wind blew through the great rose-tree be-

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fore the house, it whispered to the roses, "Who is more lovely than ye are?" But the roses shook their heads and said, "Elise is far more lovely!" And if the old wife sat on a Sunday before the cottage-door, and read in her book of hymns, the wind turned over the leaves, and said to the book, "Who is more pious than thou?" "Elise!" answered the hymn-book; and what the roses and the hymn-book said was quite true.

When Elise was fifteen years old, she was to return home; but as soon as the Queen saw how beautiful she was, she took such an aversion to her that she would have liked to change her into a wild swan like her brothers. However, she did not dare to do so, because the King wanted to see his daughter.

One morning early, the Queen went into her bath, which was of marble, and ornamented with soft cushions and costly carpets. She took three toads, kissed them, and said to one of them, "Do thou sit on the head of Elise when she goes to bathe,

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that she may become as lazy and drowsy as thou art." "Sit thou on her forehead," said she to another, "that she may grow as ugly as thou art, so that her father may not recognise her." "Do thou lie in her bosom," said she to the third, "that her heart may be tainted, and that she may grow wicked, and be her own punishment."

Then she put the toads into the clear water, which immediately assumed a greenish color; and she called Elise, undressed her, and made her step into the bath, and put her head under the water. And then one toad sat in her hair, the other on her forehead, and the third on her bosom; but Elise did not seem to remark it. When she left the bath there swam three red poppies on the water; and had the animals not been poisonous, and kissed by the witch, they would have been turned into roses, from tarrying a while on Elise's heart and head. She was too pious for witchcraft to have any power over her.

When the wicked Queen saw this, she rubbed the child all over with walnut-juice.

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till she was of a dark-brown color; smeared her lovely face with a stinking ointment, and made her fine long hair hang in wild confusion. To recognise the beautiful Elise was now impossible.

When her father saw her he started, and said that she was not his daughter. Nobody knew her again, except the house-dog and the swallow; but they were poor creatures, who had nothing to say in the matter.

Poor Elise wept bitterly, and thought of her eleven brothers, not one of whom did she see at the palace. Much afflicted, she stole away, and walked across field and moor to the large forest. She knew not whither she wanted to go; but she was very dejected, and had such a longing after her brothers, who, no doubt, had been turned adrift in the world, too; them would she seek, and she was determined to find them.

She had not been long in the forest before night came on, and she lost her way in the dark. So she laid herself down in the soft moss, said her evening prayer, and leaned her head on the stump of a tree. It was so

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still in the forest, the air was so mild, and around in the grass and on the moss there gleamed the green light of many hundred glow-worms; and when she gently touched one of the branches with her hand, the radiant insects came down to her like falling stars.

The whole night she dreamed of her brothers: they played again like children, wrote on golden tablets with pencils of diamond, and looked at the pretty picture-book that had cost half a kingdom; but on the tablets they did not merely write as formerly, strokes and O's; no, now they described the bold deeds that they had accomplished, and the strange fortunes they had experienced; and in the picture-book all was animated—the birds sang, the men stepped out of the book and spoke with Elise and her brothers: but when she turned over a leaf, in they jumped again directly, in order that the pictures might not get into confusion.

When Elise awoke, the sun was already high in the heaven: it is true she could not see it, the high trees interwove their leafy

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branches so closely; but the sunbeams played upon them, and looked like a waving golden gauze. There was such a fragrance from the verdure; and the birds almost perched on Elise's shoulder. She heard the water splashing; for there were many considerable brooks which all met in a pond with a beautiful sandy bottom: 'tis true thick bushes grew all around it; but the deer had broken a broad way through, and on this path Elise went to the water. It was so clear, that if the boughs and the bushes had not been waved backwards and forwards by the wind, one would have been forced to believe that they were painted, and lay down at the bottom, so distinctly was every leaf reflected, those that glowed in the sunlight as well as those which lay in the shade.

When Elise saw her face in the water she was much frightened, so brown and ugly did she look; but when she wetted her little hand and rubbed her eyes and forehead, the white skin appeared again; and Elise laid her clothes aside and stepped into the fresh

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water,—a more lovely royal child than she was not to be found in the whole world.

After she had dressed herself and braided her long hair, she went to the bubbling spring, drank out of the hollow of her hand, and wandered farther into the wood—she herself knew not whither. She thought of her brothers, thought of the ever-watchful and good God, Who would certainly not forsake her; for it was He Who made the wild apples to grow, to give food to the hungry; and He showed her a tree whose branches bent down under the weight of the fruit. Here she dined, put props under the branches, and then went into the thickest part of the wood. It was so still there that she heard her own footsteps, and the rustle of every withered leaf that bent beneath her feet. Not a bird was to be seen, not a sunbeam penetrated the thick foliage-roof; and the high trunks stood so near together, that when she looked straight forward, a grating of wooden beams seemed to close around her: oh, it was a solitude such as Elise had never known! And the night was so dark

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—not a single glow-worm shone! Much afflicted, she lay down to sleep; and there it seemed to her as if the boughs above her parted, and the ever-watchful and good God looked down upon her with an eye of love, and a thousand little angels peeped forth to gaze at her from the clouds.

On awaking the next morning, she did not know if it were a dream, or if it had really happened.

She went a few steps further on, when she met an old woman with a basket full of berries. The old woman gave her some. Elise asked her if she had not seen eleven Princes riding through the wood.

"No," answered the woman; "but yesterday I saw eleven swans, with golden crowns on their heads, swim down the stream near here."

And she led Elise to a hill, at whose foot a brook flowed winding along; the trees on either bank stretched their long leafy branches towards each other, and where on account of their natural growth they were unable to meet, the roots had loosened them-

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selves from the earth and hung interwoven over the water.

Elise bade the old woman farewell, and walked on by the side of the brook to the spot where it flowed into the great and open sea.

The whole sea lay spread out before the maiden; but not a sail, not a boat was to be seen: how was she to go on? She looked at the countless pebbles on the shore; they were all smooth and rounded by the water; glass, iron, stones—all that lay on the shore had received this form from the water; and yet it was much softer than her little delicate hand. "It rolls on untiringly, and even what is hard is made smooth. Not less untiring will I be: thanks for the lesson, ye clear rolling waves; some day, so my heart tells me, ye will bear me to where my dear brothers are!"

On the sea-weed which was washed up on the shore lay eleven white swans' feathers: Elise collected them into a nosegay: some drops were hanging on them, but whether dew or tears it was impossible to distinguish.

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On the shore it was very solitary, but she felt it not; for the sea presented an eternal change—more in one single hour than the lakes could show in a whole year. If a black cloud came, it was as if the sea would say, "I, too, can look gloomy;" and then the wind blew, and the waves turned their white sides outermost; but if the clouds looked red, and the winds slept, then the sea was like a rose-leaf—now it was green, now white; but however still it might rest, there was on the shore a gentle motion, and the water heaved slightly, like a sleeping infant's bosom.

As the sun was going down, Elise saw eleven wild swans, with golden crowns on their heads, flying towards the land: they flew one behind the other, and looked like a long white pennon. Then Elise climbed up the hill, and hid herself behind some bushes; the swans alighted close to her, and fluttered their large white wings.

The sun sank into the water, and suddenly the swan-like forms disappeared, and eleven handsome Princes, Elise's brothers,

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stood before her. She uttered a loud cry; for although they were greatly changed, Elise knew—felt they were her brothers; and she threw herself in their arms, calling them by name; and the brothers were so happy when they saw and recognised their dear little sister, who was now grown so tall and beautiful. They laughed and wept; and they had soon told each other how ill their step-mother had treated them all.

"We fly as wild swans," said the eldest of the brothers, "as long as the sun is above the horizon; but when he has set we appear in our human form again. We must, therefore, take good heed at such time to have a resting-place; for were we flying then in the clouds, we should drop down as men into the deep below. This is not our dwelling-place: a land as beautiful as this lies beyond the sea; but the way is long,—we must cross the vast ocean, and there is no island on our passage where we could pass the night: there is but a small solitary rock that rises out of the waves; it is only large enough for us to stand side by side

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upon it, and so to take our rest: if the sea be troubled, then the water dashes high over our heads. But yet we thank Heaven for even this resting-place: there we pass the night in our human form; and without this cliff we should never be able to visit our beloved country; for it takes two of the longest days of the year to accomplish our flight. Once a year only are we permitted to revisit the home of our fathers: we may stay here eleven days; and then we fly over the large forest, whence we can espy the palace in which our father dwells, and where we were born; whence we can see the high tower of the church in which our mother lies. Here the very trees and bushes seem familiar to us; here the wild horses still dash over the plains as when we saw them in our childhood; the charcoal-burner sings the same old tune to which we danced in our youth;—all here has charms for us, and here we have found thee, dear little sister! Two days more are we permitted to stay, and then we must away over the sea to a pleasant land; but, lovely as it is, it is not

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the country of our birth. And thou, Elise, how can we take thee with us—we have neither ship nor boat?"

"Oh, how can I set ye free?" said their sister. And so they spoke together nearly the whole night; a few hours only were given to sleep.

The next morning Elise was awakened by the rustling of swans' wings rushing by over her head. Her brothers were again changed into swans, and flew around in large circles, and at last they were far, far off. But one of them, the youngest, stayed with her; he laid his head on her lap, and she stroked his large white wings: the whole day they stayed together. Towards evening the others returned; and when the sun was gone down, there they stood again in their natural shapes.

"To-morrow," said the youngest, "we must fly hence, and may not return before the end of another year: but we cannot leave thee here. Hast thou courage to follow us? My arm is strong enough to carry thee through the wood: the wings of us all

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would surely then be powerful enough to bear thee over the sea."

"Yes, take me with you," said Elise. And they spent the whole night in weaving a sort of mat of the flexible bark of the willow and of tough bull-rushes; and when finished it was large and strong. Elise laid herself upon it; and when the sun appeared, and her brothers were again changed into wild swans, they took the mat in their bills, and flew with their dear sister, who still slept, high up into the clouds. The rays of the sun fell full upon her face; so one of the swans flew above her head, that he might overshadow her with his broad wings.

They were far distant from land when Elise awoke. She thought she must be in a dream, so strange did it seem to her to be borne thus through the air high above the ocean. Beside her lay a branch with ripe juicy berries, and a bundle of palatable roots; these her youngest brother had gathered and placed near her; and she looked up to him with a smile of gratitude; for she recognised him in the swan that flew

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above her head and shaded her with his wings.

They flew so high, that the first ship they saw below them seemed like a white sea-mew hovering over the waves. Elise beheld a large cloud behind them: it was a mountain, and on it she saw in gigantic proportions the shadows of herself and of the eleven swans. It was a picture more magnificent than eye had ever gazed on; but as the sun rose higher and the cloud was left behind, the shadowy picture vanished. The whole day they flew on like a whizzing arrow; but yet it was more slowly than usual, for they had their sister to carry. The sky looked threatening; the evening was closing in; and Elise, full of anxiety, saw the sun sinking down; but the solitary rock was not to be discerned. She fancied by the beating of their wings that the swans were exerting themselves very much. Alas, it was her fault that her brothers could not advance more quickly! Should the sun set, then they would be men,—they would fall into the sea and be drowned. From her

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very inmost heart did she pray to God; but as yet no rock was to be seen: the black cloud drew nearer; the violent gusts of wind announced a storm; the clouds stood upreared on a frightfully large wave, that rolled onwards with the speed of the hurricane; and it lightened, one flash quickly following the other.

The sun was now on the very margin of the sea. Elise's heart beat violently; when suddenly the swans darted downwards so rapidly that she thought she was falling; but now again she floated in the air. The sun was half in the water when she perceived for the first time the small rock below her, which to her eyes did not appear larger than the head of a seal when the creature holds it out of the water. And the sun went down so fast: already it was only like a star; when at the same moment her foot touched the firm ground, and the sun vanished like the last spark of a piece of burning paper. She saw her brothers standing round her arm-in-arm; but there was not more room than just enough for them

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and for her. The sea dashed boisterously against the rock, and fell on them like a heavy shower of rain; the sky was one continual blaze of fire, and the thunder rolled uninterruptedly; but the brothers and their sister held each other by the hand and sang a psalm, and it gave them consolation and strength.

At daybreak the air was clear and still; and as soon as the sun rose the swans flew away from the island with Elise. There was yet a high sea; and when they were up in the clouds, and looked down on the blackish-green ocean full of white foam, it seemed as if a million swans were skimming over the water.

As the sun rose higher, Elise saw before her, half swimming as it were in the air, a mountainous country with glittering glaciers; and amid them stood a palace, miles long, with one bold colonnade rising over the other, and surrounded with palm-groves and beautiful flowers, each as large as a mill-wheel. She asked if that was the land to which they were flying: but the swans

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shook their heads; for what she saw was the glorious and ever-changing cloud-palace of the Fata Morgana,*—thither they dare bring no one; and while Elise's gaze was still fixed upon it, mountains, groves, and palace all tumbled down together, and twelve proud churches stood in their place, all like each other, with high towers and pointed windows. She thought she could hear the organ pealing; but what she heard was merely the roar of the sea. She was now quite near the churches, when suddenly they were changed into a fleet that sailed below. She looked down, but there was only the haze of the sea driving along over the water. There was a continual change before her eyes; but at last she really saw the land she was to go to. There beautiful blue mountains lifted themselves on high, with forests of cedars, and towers, and palaces. Long before sunset she was sitting on a hill before a large cavern, which was

* Mirage. An optical illusion, presenting an image of objects on the earth or sea, as if elevated into the air.

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so thickly covered by green creeping-plants, that it looked as if overspread with embroidered hangings.

"Let us see, now, what you dream to-night!" said the youngest brother, as he showed her the chamber where she was to sleep.

"Would that I might dream how I could disenchant you!" said she. And this thought possessed her entirely; she prayed heartily to God for aid, and even in her dreams continued her prayer. Then it seemed to her as if she were flying high through the air to the cloud-palace of the Fata Morgana; and the Fairy advanced to meet her in light and loveliness; and yet, after all, it was the old woman who had given her berries in the wood, and told her of the swans with golden crowns on their heads.

"Thy brothers may be released," said the Fairy; "but hast thou patience and fortitude? 'Tis true the sea is softer than thy delicate hands, and yet it changes the form of the hard stones; but it feels not the

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pain which your tender fingers would suffer. It has no heart, and suffereth not the anguish and suspense which thou wouldst have to endure. Dost thou see these nettles in my hand? Many such grow around the cave where thou sleepest; these only, and such as shoot up out of the graves in the churchyard, are of use; and mark this—thou must gather them although they sting thy hands; thou must brake* the nettles with thy feet, and then thou wilt have yarn; and of this yarn, with weaving and winding, thou must make eleven shirts of mail with long sleeves; and if thou wilt throw these over the eleven wild swans, then the enchantment will be at an end. But remember, from the moment thou beginnest thy work until its completion, even should years pass by meanwhile, thou must not utter a single word: the first sound of thy lips will pass like a fatal dagger through thy brothers' hearts—on thy tongue depends their life. Mark well all that I say!"

* A brake is an instrument for dressing flax.

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And at the same moment the Fairy touched Elise's hand with the nettle: it was like burning fire; and it awoke her. It was bright day; and close beside her bed lay a nettle like that she had seen in her dream. Then she fell on her knees, thanked God, and went out of the cavern to begin her work.

With her delicate hands she seized the horrid nettles that burned like fire. Her hands and arms were blistered; but she minded it not, could her dear brothers be but freed. She trampled on each nettle with her naked feet, and twisted the green flax.

At sunset her brothers returned: they were sadly frightened at Elise's dumbness, and thought it was a new enchantment under which she was laid by their wicked step-mother; but when they saw her blistered hands, they knew what their sister was doing for their sakes, and the youngest brother wept; and whenever his tears fell Elise felt no pain—the burning smart ceased immediately.

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The whole night she was occupied with her work; for she could not rest till she had freed her dear brothers. All the following day she sat in solitude, while the swans were flying afar; but never did time seem to pass so quickly. One shirt of mail was finished; and now she begun the second.

Suddenly the horn of a hunter was heard among the mountains. She grew frightened —the sound came nearer—she heard the bark of the dogs. Full of apprehension, she flew into the cavern, tied the nettles which she had gathered and hackled into a bundle, and seated herself upon it.

At the same moment a large dog sprang forward out of the bushes, and immediately after another and another: they barked loudly, then ran back and came again. It was not long before the hunters themselves stood in front of the cave, and the handsomest of them all was the King of the country. He advanced towards Elise; a maiden more beautiful than she had he never beheld.

"Whence comest thou, lovely child?"

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said he. Elise shook her head; she dared not speak, for the deliverance and the life of her brothers depended on her silence. She hid her hands underneath her apron, that the King might not see what she was obliged to suffer.

"Come with me," said he; "thou must not stay here. If thou art as good as thou art beautiful, I will clothe thee in silk and velvet, I will put a golden crown upon thy head, and thou shalt dwell in my palace with me." So saying, he lifted her on his horse. She wept and wrung her hands; but the King said, "I only seek thy happiness! one day thou wilt be thankful to me!" And he galloped away over hill and valley, holding her fast before him; and the huntsmen followed at full speed.

As the sun was going down, she saw before her the magnificent capital, with its churches and domes; and the King led her to the palace, where jets of water were splashing on the high marble walls; where wall and ceiling shone with the richest paintings: but all this delighted not her

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eyes; she mourned and wept, and in silence suffered the women to array her in royal robes; to braid her hair with pearls, and to put soft gloves on her burned hands.

At last there she stood in all her glory, and was so dazzlingly beautiful that the whole court bowed before her; and the King chose her as his betrothed; although the archbishop shook his head, and whispered to the King that the lovely forest maiden must certainly be a witch, who had intoxicated his heart and dazzled his eye by her beauty.

But the King gave no heed to his words: he ordered the music to sound, and the richest meats were served, and the loveliest girls danced before her, and she was led through odorous gardens to the most magnificent halls. But no smile played on her lip, nor in her eye: affliction only was hers; it was her sole possession. Then the King opened a small chamber adjoining her sleeping-room: it was covered with costly green carpeting, and resembled exactly the cavern in which she had formerly been. On the floor

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lay a bundle of flax, which she had spun from the fibres of the nettles; and from the ceiling hung the shirt of mail which she had completed. All this had been collected and brought hither by one of the hunters as a curiosity.

"Here thou canst dream that thou art in thy former home," said the King. "Here is the work which occupied thee there. Now amid all thy splendor it will delight thee to live in fancy that time over again."

When Elise saw what was so dear to her heart, a smile played about her mouth, and the blood came back again to her cheeks. She thought of the deliverance of her brothers, and kissed the King's hand. He pressed her to his heart, and ordered that all the church-bells should announce the wedding-festival. The beautiful forest maiden became Queen of the country.

Then the archbishop whispered words of evil import in the King's ear; but they did not sink deep in his heart. The marriage was celebrated; the archbishop even was obliged to set the crown on her head; and in

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his wicked rage he pressed the narrow circlet of gold so hard upon her forehead, that it pained her; but a heavier weight, grief for her brothers, lay on her heart; so that she felt not the bodily smart. She spoke not; for a single word would have caused her brothers' death; but in her eyes was an expression of deep love for the good and handsome King, who did every thing to make her happy. With her whole heart she grew every day more attached to him: oh! had she but dared to confide to him her sorrows, and tell him all she felt! But dumb she must remain; in silence must she accomplish her task. And so at night she slipped away, went into the small room which was decked like the cavern, and wove one shirt of mail after the other; but when she began the seventh, behold, the flax was all gone!

She well knew that such nettles as she could use grew in the churchyard; but then she herself must gather them, and how was she to get out to do so?

"Oh, what's the smarting of my fingers

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compared to the anguish that my heart endures?" thought she: "venture I must; and God will surely not withdraw His hand from me."

Trembling as though she were going to commit a wicked action, she one moonlight night crept down into the garden, and went through the long avenues, and on the solitary road to the churchyard. There she saw on one of the broadest gravestones a troop of Lamias sitting—ugly witches, who took off their ragged covering as though they were going to bathe, and then dug with their long thin fingers amid the fresh grass, and drew forth the dead bodies, and devoured the flesh. Elise was forced to pass near them; and the witches fixed upon her their malicious eyes; but she said a prayer, gathered the stinging-nettles, and carried them home to the palace.

Only a single person had seen her: it was the archbishop. He watched while the others slept. Now he was sure he was right when he said the Queen was not what she should be: that she was a witch; and that the

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King and the people were beguiled by her enchantments.

When the King went to confess, the archbishop told him what he had seen, and what he feared; and as these wicked words passed his lips, the carved figures of saints around the confessional shook their heads, as though they would say, "It is not true! Elise is innocent!" But the archbishop explained it otherwise; he said it was a sign of her guilt, and that the figures shook their heads at her sins.

Then two large tears rolled down the cheeks of the King; and it was with a heavy heart that he went home. In the night he pretended to be asleep; but no sleep came to his eyes; and he observed that Elise rose every night; and each time he followed her softly, and saw how she disappeared in her little room.

Each day the countenance of the King grew darker. Elise saw it, and knew not the cause; but it made her uneasy: and what did her heart not suffer on her brothers' account! Her bitter tears rolled

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down on the royal velvet and purple, and lay there like sparkling diamonds; and all who saw the splendor and magnificence with which she was surrounded, wished themselves in Elise's place.

In the meantime, however, her work was nearly completed; one shirt of mail only was wanting, but her flax was exhausted: she had not a single nettle more. Once more, only once, would she be obliged to go to the churchyard and pluck a handful. She thought with terror of the lonely walk, and of the horrible Lamias; but her resolve was as firm as her trust in God.

Elise went; but the King and the archbishop followed her. They saw her vanish at the churchyard gate; and, on approaching nearer, they saw the Lamias sitting on a grave-stone, as Elise had seen them; and the King turned away at the sight; for he thought that she, whose head had that evening rested on his bosom, was one of them.

"She shall be judged by the people!" said he, with a faltering voice. And the

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sentence of the people was—"That she should be burnt alive!"

From the magnificent royal hall she was now led to a dismal damp cell, where the wind whistled through the grated window. Instead of velvet and silk, they gave her the bundle of nettles which she had collected in the churchyard, tied together with a thick piece of rope. "These," they said, "she might lay under her head as a pillow;" and the coarse hard shirts of mail were to serve her as bed and covering: but nothing could have delighted her more; and she set to work again, and prayed fervently to God. Before her prison-door the populace sang jeering songs about her: not a soul comforted her with one word of affection.

All at once, towards evening, she heard the rustling of swans' wings close to her window. It was her youngest brother, who had found his sister; and she sobbed aloud for joy, although she knew that the coming night would perhaps be the last of her life. But then the work was nearly done, and her brothers were at hand.

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The archbishop came to pass the last hour with her, for he had promised the King to do so; but she shook her head, and begged him, by look and gesture, to leave her. This night her task must be accomplished, or all would have been in vain; all her tears, her sorrows, her silence, and her many sleepless nights. The archbishop went away with angry words upon his lips; but poor Elise knew she had done nothing wrong, and continued her work.

The little mice ran busily backwards and forwards about the dungeon, and dragged the nettles to her feet, in order to help her a little; and the thrush sat on the grating of her window, and sang the whole night as merrily as he could, that Elise might not be disheartened.

It began to dawn; it was still an hour before the sun would rise and shine in all his summer splendor, when the eleven brothers stood before the palace-gates, and asked to be led into the presence of the King. They were told it could not be, for it was still night; besides, the King was asleep, and no one dared to wake him. They en-

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treated, they threatened; the guard came, and at last even the King appeared, and asked what was the matter; when just at that moment the sun rose, and there were no longer any brothers to be found: there were only eleven white swans to be seen flying away over the palace.

The people streamed out of the city-gates; for all wished to see the witch burnt. A miserable horse dragged the cart on which she sat: they had dressed her in a sort of frock of coarse sackcloth; her beautiful long hair hung loose around her head; her cheeks were deathly pale; her lips moved almost imperceptibly while she spun the green-flax; for even on the way to death she ceased not from the work she had begun. The ten shirts of mail lay at her feet; she was weaving the eleventh.

The people cruelly laughed at her all this time. "Look at the witch!" shouted they; "how she is muttering! She has no book of psalms in her hand; no, there she sits with her accursed conjuration: take it from her! let us tear the witch stuff in a thousand pieces!"

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So saying, they all rushed towards her, intending to rob her of her treasure and destroy the shirts of mail; when suddenly eleven white swans were seen. They flew to Elise, formed a circle round her, and beat the air with their wings. The frightened crowd gave way.

"'Tis a sign from heaven! she is surely innocent!" whispered some; but they dared not say it aloud.

The executioner seized her hand; when quickly she threw the eleven shirts of mail over the swans, and eleven handsome princes stood before her; but the youngest had one swans' wing instead of an arm, for a sleeve was wanting on his shirt of mail; since his good sister Elise, with all her zeal, unequalled as it was, had not been quite able to finish it. And the populace, that had seen what had happened, bowed before her as before a saint; but she sank insensible in the arms of her brothers, overcome by suspense, pain, and sorrow.

"Yes, she is innocent!" said the eldest brother; and he related all that had befallen her. While he spake, an odor as of a million

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roses spread around; for each billet of wood in the pile had taken root, and put forth branches and blossoms; so that instead of the horrid flames which were expected, there was now a sweetly smelling hedge full of red roses: and on the top of all was a flower of dazzling whiteness, and shining like a star. The King plucked this flower, and laid it on Elise's bosom; and she awoke with joy and peace in her heart.

Then all the church-bells began ringing of their own accord, and the birds came in swarms; and the procession to the palace was such as no King had ever seen before.

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The Angel.

S soon as a good little child dies, one of God's angels descends to the earth, takes the dead child in his arms, spreads out his large white wings, and flies over all the places that were dear to the little one when was alive; and on the way he gathers a

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handful of flowers, which he then carries to Heaven, in order that they may bloom still more beautifully there than they did here on Earth. The loving God presseth all these flowers to His bosom; but the flower that He loveth best He kisseth; and then it receives a sweet clear voice, so that it can sing and rejoice with the happy hosts around.

An Angel of God related this as he bore a dead Child to Heaven; and the Child heard as in a dream; and they flew over all the spots around the home where the little one had played in its lifetime, and they passed through gardens with the loveliest flowers. "Which flower shall we take with us and plant afresh in Heaven?" asked the Angel.

And a beautiful slender rose-tree was standing there; but a rude hand had wantonly broken the stem, so that all the branches, that a short time before were so fair and green, and which were full of large half-open rose-buds, now hung down quite withered and sad, upon the soft, smooth carpet of turf.

"The poor tree!" said the Child; "take

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it, so that it may bloom again on high with the loving God."

And the Angel took it, and kissed the Child; and the little one half-opened his eyes. They gathered some of the superb flowers; but they took the despised daisy and the wild pansy, too.

"Now we have flowers," said the Child, and the Angel nodded, as if to say, "yes;" but they did not yet fly up to Heaven.

It was night: it was quite still. They stayed a while in the great city, near which the child had lived, they floated to and fro in one of the narrowest streets, where great heaps of straw, of ashes and rubbish, lay about: there had been a removal. The streets looked disordered and dirty. There lay broken pots and plates, plaster figures, rags, the crowns of old hats; nothing but things that were displeasing to the sight.

And amidst the devastation the Angel pointed to the fragments of a flower-pot, and to a clod of earth that had fallen out of it, and which was only held together by the roots of a great withered wild flower; but

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it was good for nothing now, and was therefore thrown out into the street.

"We will take that one with us," said the Angel, "and I will tell you about it while we are flying."

And now they flew on; and the Angel related:

"Down yonder, in the narrow street, in the low cellar, lived once a poor sickly boy. He had been bedridden from his very infancy, for an incurable disease had seized upon his tender frame. When he was very well indeed, he could just go a few times up and down the little room on his crutches; that was all. Some days in summer the sunbeams fell for half an hour on the little cellar-window; and then, when the boy sat there, and let the warm sun shine upon him, and saw the red blood through his small thin fingers, then it was said, 'Yes, he has been out to-day.' All he knew of the wondrously beautiful spring-time, the green and beauty of the woods, was from the first bough of a beech-tree that a neighbor's son once brought him as a May-day token; and

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he held it over his head, and dreamed he was under the green shelter of the beech-trees, where the sun shone and the birds were singing around him.

"One day in spring his neighbor's son brought him some wild flowers also, and among them was by chance one with a root; it was therefore planted in a flower-pot and placed in the window close by his bedside. And a fortunate hand had planted the flower; it thrived, put forth new shoots, and every year it bore sweet-smelling flowers. To the eyes of the sick boy it became the the most beautiful garden—his little treasure upon earth: he watered and tended it, and took care that it got every sunbeam, to the very last that glided by on the lowest pane. And the flower grew up in his very dreams, with its colors and its fragrance; it was overlooked by others, and for him alone it bloomed and smelt so sweetly: to it he turned in dying, when the loving God called him to Himself. He has now been a year with God—a year has the flower stood in the window withered and forgotten, and

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now, at the removal, it has been thrown among the rubbish into the street. And that is the flower, the same poor faded flower, which we have taken into our garland; for this flower has caused more joy than the rarest flower in the garden of a queen."

"But how do you know all this?" asked the Child whom the Angel was carrying up to Heaven.

"I know it," said the Angel; "I was myself the little sick boy that went on crutches; I must surely know my own flower again."

And the Child opened his eyes and looked in the beautiful calm face of the Angel; and at the same moment they were in Heaven, where was only joy and blessedness.

And God pressed the dead Child to His bosom: thereon it became winged like the other Angel, and flew hand in hand with him; and God pressed all the flowers to His bosom, but the poor withered flower He kissed; and a voice was given to it, and it sang a song of triumph with all the angels that moved around God in Heaven, some

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sweeping on their bright wings quite near to him, others round these in larger circles, always further away in immensity, but all equally blessed.

And they all sang, great and small; the good, innocent little child, who once limped about on his toilsome crutches, and the poor field-flower that had lain withered among the sweepings in the narrow, dingy street.

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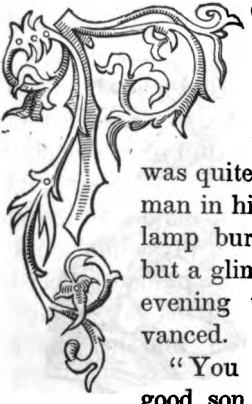
The Fellow-Traveler.



POOR Johnny was very melancholy; for his father lay grievously ill, and could not hope to live. He was quite alone with the sick man in his small chamber; the lamp burned faintly, and gave but a glimmering light, and the evening was already far advanced.

"You have always been a good son to me, Johnny," said the dying father, "and God will therefore

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certainly help you through the world!" He cast a tender look upon his son, heaved a deep sigh, and died. There he lay as though he were asleep. But Johnny wept; for now he had not a friend in the whole world—neither father nor mother, brother nor sister. Poor John! he knelt beside the bed, kissed his dead father's hands, and wept bitterly; but at last he fell asleep, and his wearied head sank on the hard bedstead.

Then he dreamed that he saw the sun and the moon bowing before him, and his father recovered, and laughing merrily: and he laughed just as he did when he was alive. A lovely maiden, wearing a golden crown in her long and beautiful hair, stretched out her hand to him; and his father said, "Look at her, the most lovely maiden in the world, who one day will be thy wife!" and then he awoke. The vision he had beheld in his dream had vanished; his father lay dead and cold on the bed, and he was alone. Poor John!

The next week was the funeral. John followed close behind the coffin, and wept

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again most bitterly; for he would never see his good father more—he who had thought so much of him! He heard the earth fall upon the coffin, he still saw the last corner of it; but with the next shovelful of earth even that was no longer visible. Then it seemed to him as though his heart would break, so very wretched did he feel. Yet he felt some consolation from the singing of the children round the grave; his tears flowed and relieved his heavy grief. The sun shone with a friendly look upon the green trees, as though it would say, "Be not so sorrowful, John! Seest thou not how blue and beautiful the heaven is? Thy father is there now, and implores a merciful God to take thee under his protection, that thou mayest be happy!"

"I will always behave well," thought John, "and then one day I shall go to heaven to my father. Oh, how shall we rejoice when we see each other again! And he will again show me many things, and teach me what is heavenly felicity, as he

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did when here on earth. Oh, how happy shall I be!"

John pictured this heavenly meeting so vividly to himself, that he smiled through his tears. The little birds sat in the chestnut-tree, and chirped their gladsome song; they were happy, although they had come with him to the funeral. But they knew very well that the dead man was now in heaven, and that he had wings which were much larger and more beautiful than their own; for he had led a good life, and therefore was it that they rejoiced. John saw how they flew from the green trees out into the world, and he felt a wish to fly away, too. But he first made a large cross of wood, to put over his father's grave; and when he carried it there in the evening, he found the grave decorated with flowers. Others had done this; for everybody loved the good old father that was now no more.

Early in the morning John buckled on his little knapsack, put his whole fortune, consisting of fifty crowns, carefully into his girdle, and intended to set out on his travels.

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But, before doing so, he went to the churchyard, repeated a pious thanksgiving at the grave of his father, and said: "Farewell, dear father! I vow that I will always act uprightly, and then you will be able to pray God to protect and aid me."

In the fields the flowers displayed themselves fresh and beautiful in the warm sunshine, and appeared to nod him their welcoming. John returned once more to the old church where, when a little child, he had been baptized, and where he had gone every Sunday with his father to hear the service, and where, too, he had sung many a psalm. There he saw how the little sprite of the church stood in the belfry-window, in a pointed red cap, and with one hand shaded his eyes from the sun, which was shining directly in his face. John waved him a farewell; and the little sprite waved his red cap in return, laid one hand on his heart, and kissing the other, gave him to understand how sincerely he wished him well, and that he might have a right happy journey.

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John now thought of all the fine things he should see in the great and splendid world, and kept going on farther and farther than he had ever been before, till at last he did not know a single place that he passed through, or the people whom he met. So he was now a good way off, and amid perfect strangers.

The first night he was forced to pass on a haycock in the open air: other bed had he none. But this seemed to him very beautiful; the king, he thought, could not have a better. The whole large meadow watered by a stream, the haycock, and the blue sky above, seemed to him a splendid bedchamber. The green grass, with the many red and white flowers, was his carpet; the elder and the wild roses his flower-bed; and the stream, with its fresh blue waves, his bath, out of which the sedge nodded him a friendly "good night" and "good morrow." The moon was the large night-lamp, which burnt high up on the blue ceiling of heaven, without any danger of setting his bed-curtains on fire. Here he might sleep quietly; and

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he did so, too, and only awoke just as the sun was rising, and the little birds all around sang. "Good morrow! good morrow! are you not up yet?"

When he set out again on his wayfaring, and had reached the next village, he heard the ringing of bells, and saw the people going to church. He therefore entered the house of God, heard the sermon, and joined in the song of thanksgiving; and it seemed to him as if he were again in his own church with his father.

In the churchyard were many graves, on some of which rank grass was growing. "The mound over my father's grave will soon look so, too," thought he in sorrowful silence; "for no one will weed up the grass and plant flowers upon it!" While he thus talked to himself, he pulled up some of the weeds about the graves, set up the crosses that had fallen down, and hung on them the wreaths of evergreens that had been blown away by the wind. "Perhaps another may do as much for my father's grave, as I am no longer able," said he. At the gate of the

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churchyard stood an old beggar, who supported himself on crutches. John gave him a piece of silver, and then, contented and happy, continued his journey.

Towards evening a storm came on; John tried to find a place of shelter, but it was dark before he could reach a house. At last he saw a small church on a hill before him, and when he reached it he found the door ajar. So he went in, intending to remain there till the storm had subsided.

"I will sit here in the corner," said he; "I am quite tired, and have need of a little rest." He leaned his head against the wall, folded his hands as he repeated his evening prayer, and soon fell into a sound sleep, the while it thundered and lightened without.

It was midnight when he awoke; but the storm had passed, and the moon shone through the high church-windows. On the pavement of the church stood an open coffin, in which a dead man lay, placed there for burial. John was not the least frightened at the sight; for he had a good conscience, and knew for certain that the dead harm no one;

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but that it is the wicked only who can work us evil. And such were the two men now standing beside the corpse in the open coffin, that had been only placed in the church until the funeral. They would leave him no place even in death, and intended to fling the dead man out into the churchyard.

"Why will you do that?" asked John. "It is wrong of you: let the corpse rest, in Christ's name!"

"Hallo! what now!" answered the two villains. "He has cheated us; he owed us money that he could not pay, and now he has chosen to die into the bargain; so that we shall never get a farthing of our money. We will have our revenge, and fling him out of his coffin, and let him lie on the earth like a dog."

"I have only fifty crowns," said John; "they are all my inheritance; but I will give them to you if you will only promise me faithfully to leave the poor corpse in peace."

"If you choose to pay for him," continued the two men, "we will do him no harm, that you may be sure of."

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Then they took the money that John offered them, laughed scornfully at his good nature, and left the church. But John laid out the dead body carefully, folded the hands over the breast, and bade it adieu. He, too, then left the little church, and went with a light heart through the wood.

All around, where the waning moon could shine through the trees, he saw the pretty little elves at play, who did not allow his arrival to interrupt them, because they knew that good people only are permitted to see them. Some were hardly as big as one's finger, and had their long yellow hair done up with golden combs. They rocked themselves on the large dewdrops that sparkled on the leaves of the trees and the high grass; and if a drop rolled down, and one or the other of the little creatures tumbled head over heels on the long grass, the rest laughed and danced for joy. It was a droll sight to see. They began, too, to sing; and John knew all the airs. Large brown spiders, with silver crowns, were obliged to stretch long suspension-bridges from one

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hedge to the other, which, when the dew-drops fell on them, looked like a web of spun glass. Thus they amused themselves in all manner of ways till the sun appeared. Then the little elves crept into the cups of the flowers, and the wind broke their suspension-bridges and their aërial castles, and wafted them through the air.

John had just reached the skirt of the wood, when the loud voice of a man called after him, "Hallo, comrade! where are you bound for?"

"Into the wide world," answered John. "I have neither father nor mother—I am a poor youth; but I trust confidently in God, who, I do not doubt, will help me on."

"I, too, am going into the world," said the strange man. "Shall we two go together?"

"With all my heart," answered John; and now on they both went in company, and soon began to like each other very much; for they both were good persons. But John soon remarked that his companion possessed much greater experience than himself; for

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he knew somewhat of everything, and had travelled over the whole world.

The sun was already high in the heavens, when they seated themselves under a tree to eat their breakfast. At the same moment an old woman passed by, who was so weak that she was obliged to go on crutches; and yet she carried a bundle of sticks at her back, that she had gathered with much labor in the wood; and out of her tucked-up apron three bundles of fern and willow-twigs were hanging. When she had got quite near the two travelers, her foot slipped; she fell, and uttered a cry of pain; for in falling the old woman had broken her leg.

John jumped up, and wanted his companion to help him to carry the old woman home; but the stranger unbuckled his knapsack, took out a little box, and said, that he had a salve in it which would cure the leg directly; but, as recompense for the cure, he required the old woman to give him the three bundles she had in her apron.

"A goodly payment, truly!" answered

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the old woman, laughing wildly. It was true, she said, she did not much like giving away the herbs; yet it was a sad thing to lie a-bed with broken limbs; and therefore she gave them to the stranger. As soon as she had rubbed her leg with the salve, she got up quite cured; and could walk even better than before. Such was the healing power of this ointment; which, however, is not to be had at any apothecary's.

"What will you do with the herbs?" asked John of his companion.

"Those are three beautiful nosegays, in my eyes," replied the stranger; "for you must know that I am a very eccentric personage." The two travellers then went on for a good distance.

"What a storm is approaching!" said John, suddenly: "Look at those black clouds!"

"You mistake," said the other; "those are not clouds, but high mountains,—on which, far above the clouds, one enjoys the pure air of heaven. Oh, there it is wondrous beautiful! To-morrow, doubtless, we shall

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have got so far on our travels through the world."

But the mountains were not so near as John thought; for they had to walk the whole day before they reached them. Dark woods hung upon their sides; and stones were there as large as a whole town. "It would cost a good deal of trouble," said the stranger, "to cross the high mountains; and it would therefore be better to go to an inn, and rest and strengthen ourselves for the following day."

At the little public-house many people were assembled; for a man with a puppet-show had just arrived, and every body was curious to see the play. On one of the front seats sat, among other spectators, a sleek butcher, with his bull-dog beside him.

The play began. A king and a queen sat on a splendid throne: both wore golden crowns, and had robes with long trains. Pretty puppets, with glass eyes and large mustachios, stood at the window, which they kept on opening and shutting, that the royal pair might enjoy the fresh air. All went on

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well, and without accident; but when the queen rose to walk across the stage, the bull-dog—heaven knows why, or what could put it into his head—made a spring at the stage, seized the lovely queen by her slender waist, and treated her most shamefully.

The poor man, who played the whole piece alone, was so unhappy at this misfortune, that he shed tears; but when the spectators had left the room, John's companion went up to him, and comforted him with the assurance that he could cure the doll. So he took his little box out of his knapsack, and rubbed the ill-used queen with the wonderful ointment that had cured the leg of the old woman in the wood. Immediately the queen recovered; and now could even move arms and legs herself, as if she were alive.

The puppet-showman was now as joyful as he had before been sad; and that his best figure could move of itself seemed to him no trifling wonder.

In the night there was suddenly heard a continued groaning in the room, so that every body in the house was awakened by it, and

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run to see who was taken ill. The showman went to his puppets; for it seemed to him as if the sighing and lamentation proceeded from them. To his astonishment he saw that all the dolls were lying about in the greatest confusion, and moaned unceasingly, because they wished to be rubbed too, as the queen had been, that they also might have the power of moving alone. The queen herself fell on her knees, lifted her splendid golden crown on high, and said, "Take my crown!—gladly will I give it,—anoint only my consort and my court!" This scene moved the showman so much, that he offered the stranger the receipts of the next representation, if he would only rub some of his best figures with the wondrous salve. The stranger said he did not ask for money; he demanded only the sabre which the showman wore; and when the latter had most readily given it up to him, he rubbed six of the puppets with his ointment, who began to dance immediately, and so naturally, that all the servants, real living people, were seized with a mighty longing to dance also,

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and the whole household was soon figuring away—coachman and cook, waiter and chamber-maid. In this way the whole night passed in the merriest manner imaginable.

The next morning John and his companion left the inn, ascended the high mountains, and wandered through the large pine-forest. They had soon climbed so high that the churches beneath them seemed only like little red-berries amid green bushes; and their gaze wandered afar for miles. Never before had John seen so much of the glorious world. The gladdening sun shone pleasantly in the sky, and the horn of the hunter resounded in the valley. "Beneficent God," said John, lost in rapture at the sight, "fain would I thank Thee for Thy goodness to us men, and for the glorious beauty of Thy world in which Thou hast placed us!" and a tear of joy glittered in his eye.

His companion, too, stood lost in thought, and looked down upon the plain with its numerous villages and towns illumined by the sun. At the same moment they heard a strange sound; and, on looking up, beheld a

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large white swan soaring in the air. The swan was of extraordinary beauty, and sang as they had never heard bird sing before; but its song grew fainter and fainter, and at last it bent its long black neck downwards, sank slowly, and soon after lay dead at their feet.

"Such a beautiful pair of wings, so white and large as those of this fine bird are worth something," said the man. "I will take them with me. Now you see, John, that the sabre is of some use." And hereupon he, at one stroke, cut off both the wings of the dead bird, saying he intended to take care of them.

They now continued their journey over the mountains for many miles, till at last they saw a large town lying before them, with more than a hundred steeples and domes that glittered in the sunshine like silver. In the middle of this large town was a magnificent palace of marble, the roof of which was of pure gold; for here dwelt the King of the country.

John and his companion did not enter the

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town immediately, but went to an inn outside the city-gates, that they might first brush and clean their things; for they wished to appear as decent people in the streets of so magnificent a town. Here the landlord told them that the King of that country was such a good man, that he never did any thing to displease his subjects, but that the Princess, his daughter, was a sad lady. As to beauty, she did not want for that, for there could not be a more lovely maiden in the world; but she was a bad witch, for whose sake many a young prince had lost his life. Any one might demand her hand; but he must then guess her thoughts three times. Should he really guess them, then she married him, and he was to be king over the land when her father died; but should he be unable to answer the three questions proposed, she had him hanged or beheaded; so cruel a creature was this Princess. The old King, her father, was much grieved at the matter; however, he could not change it, for he had once for all declared he would have nothing to do with the love-affairs of his

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daughter, and in this respect she might act quite as she chose.

Hitherto, as often as a young Prince had come to guess the thoughts of the Princess, it had turned out badly, and the suitor had been either hanged or beheaded. Then people said he had been warned beforehand, so it was his own fault if he chose to make the Princess an offer instead of leaving her alone. Once a-year the old King and all his soldiers went to church, to pray that his daughter might change; however, she always remained the same. Old women who were addicted to gin-drinking, on this day colored their drams black, so great was the general mourning for the Princess; and what could the good wives do more to show their sincere sympathy in the King's grief?

"The good-for-nothing Princess!" said John, when the landlord had finished his story; "she ought to have the rod, for she deserves it. Were I her old father, I would soon teach her to give up her cruelty."

While they were speaking, a loud "Hurrah!" was heard in the street. It was the

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Princess who rode by, and so dazzlingly beautiful was she that, when the people looked at her, they forgot her wickedness, and broke out in shouts of joy wherever she showed herself. Twelve beautiful damsels, in white silk dresses, each holding a golden tulip in her hand, rode by her side on jet black horses, while the Princess sat on one that was quite white. Her riding-habit was of gold brocade, sprinkled with diamonds and rubies; her riding-whip was like a sunbeam, and the golden crown on her lovely head resembled the small stars of heaven. Over her charming dress hung a zephyr-like mantle of more than a thousand butterflies' wings. But all this splendor was surpassed by the radiant beauty of the Princess.

When John beheld her, he blushed deeply, and was unable to utter a word; for the Princess looked exactly like that lovely maiden of whom he had dreamed the night his father died. She appeared of matchless beauty, and he could not help loving her with all his heart. It is certainly not true, thought he, that she is such a wicked witch,

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and that she has those youths who demand her hand beheaded or hanged if they cannot guess her thoughts. Any one has the right to ask her in marriage, even the poorest. I too will go to the palace as a suitor, for I feel that I cannot be happy without her.

When he informed the others of his intention, all counselled him against so rash a step, thinking he would fare no better than his predecessors; and his travelling companion was against it too. But John was full of hope; he brushed his clothes most carefully, polished his shoes, washed his hands and face, combed his nice golden hair into curls, and then set off quite alone for the town and the palace.

"Come in!" cried the old King, when John knocked at the door. He entered, and the good old gentleman advanced towards him in dressing-gown and embroidered slippers; yet he had his golden crown on his head, the sceptre in his right hand, and the imperial globe in his left.

"Stop a moment," said he, tucking the golden globe under his arm; and holding out

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one hand to John, he gave him a hearty welcome. But as soon as he heard John's intention of proposing for the Princess, he began to weep so bitterly that globe and sceptre both rolled down upon the floor, and he was obliged to dry his tears with his dressing-gown. Poor good old King!

"Don't do it!" said he, warningly, to John; "the same will happen to you that has happened to all the rest. Only look here!" He then led John to the park of the Princess, which, true enough, presented a most dreadful spectacle; for on every tree hung the skeletons of three or four kings' sons, who had wooed the Princess but could not guess what she thought about. As often as the wind stirred among the leaves, the dry bones rattled, and scared away the birds, so that not a single songster showed himself in this fearful grove. The flowers were tied up to human bones instead of sticks, and all around, over the more tender plants, death's heads were grinning. That was a fine sort of Garden for a Princess!

"Here you may see what will be your

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fate," said the old King. "I counsel you, therefore, to desist from your intention, if you do not wish to fare like these. You will, besides, make me most unhappy if you persist; for it grieves me to the very heart."

John kissed the good old King's hand, and comforted him with the prospect of being successful in obtaining the beautiful Princess, whom he loved above every thing.

Just at this moment the Princess returned from her ride, and galloped with all her ladies into the courtyard of the palace. The King and John went to meet and salute her. The Princess was exceedingly friendly, and gave John her hand, which increased his passion for her still more; and he would on no account believe that she could be a witch as everybody asserted.

Then they all returned to the drawing-room, and were served by the prettiest little damsels imaginable, who handed round sweetmeats and gingerbread nuts. But the old King was so melancholy that he ate nothing—and, besides, the gingerbread nuts were probably a little too hard for him.

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It was now arranged that John was to come to the palace again the next morning, when the judges and the grand council would be assembled to hear how he succeeded in guessing the thoughts of the Princess. Should he guess right the first time, he was to appear before the judges two other days in the same manner; but as yet no suitors for the Princess's hand had outlived the first day.

John was not the least cast down at this information; on the contrary, he was rather gay, and of good courage. He thought only of the lovely princess; and trusted, besides, to the all-loving God for help. As to the way he was to receive it, he could form no idea; so he preferred thinking no more about the matter. Jumping for joy, he returned to his inn, where his companion awaited him.

John could never tell enough of the amiability and extraordinary beauty of the Princess; and he longed already for the morrow, when he was to return to the palace, and guess the thoughts of his beloved.

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But his companion shook his head doubtingly, and was quite sorrowful. "I love you so well," said he; "we could have kept together for a long time yet, and now we are to part! Good, dear Johnny! I could weep at this approaching separation; but I will not disturb your joy on the last evening that we may ever pass together. So let us rather be cheerful; to-morrow, when you are gone, I shall have time enough to weep!"

The inhabitants had already heard of the arrival of a new suitor for the hand of the Princess, on which account a general mourning prevailed throughout the whole town. The theatre was closed, the King and the clergy kneeled in the churches, and even the confectioners put crosses on their little figures of sugar-work; for how was it possible that this suitor should succeed better than the rest?

In the evening John's companion had a large bowl of punch brought in, and said, "they would now be right merry, and drink to the Princess's health." But John had not drank two glasses, before such a drow-

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siness came over him, that he could keep his eyes open no longer, and fell asleep in his chair.

His comrade then lifted him gently into bed; and when it was night, took the two wings which he had cut off the dead swan, and fastened them on his own shoulders. He afterwards put the largest bundle of fern and willow-twigs, which the old woman in the forest had given him, into his pocket, opened a window, and flew out, away over the town, and straight to the palace, where he hid himself in a bow-window, close to the bedchamber of the Princess.

Stillness reigned in the town. The clock was striking a quarter to twelve, when the window was opened, and the Princess, in a large white garment, and with large black wings, flew away over the town towards a high mountain. As soon as the man perceived her, he made himself invisible, followed the Princess through the air, and beat her so with his rod, that the blood well nigh followed the stripes. Holloa! Ho! That was a ride through the air! The wind

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caught the garment of the Princess, blowing it about like a sail, and the moon shone bright the while.

"Oh! how it hails!" said the Princess, at every stripe of the rod; and well enough did she deserve the chastisement. At last she arrived at the mountain, and knocked for admittance. A noise like thunder was heard as the mountain opened, and the Princess entered; and the man, whom no one could see, followed at her heels.

They passed through a long dark passage, the walls of which shone like fire from the glowing spiders that were running up and down. They afterwards arrived in a spacious hall, built of gold and silver, on whose sides red and blue flowers were displayed as large as sun-flowers; but no one dared to pick them, for their stalks were poisonous snakes, and the flowers themselves the fire that streamed from their jaws. The whole ceiling was covered with beaming worms, and sky-blue bats that fluttered their transparent wings unceasingly.

In the middle of the hall stood a large

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throne, supported by the skeletons of four horses, caparisoned with trappings of red spiders. The throne itself was of milk-white glass; and the cushions were mice, each one holding the tail of another in his mouth. Above was outspread a canopy of rose-colored cobweb, studded with small flies that shone like precious stones.

On the throne sat an old goblin, with a crown on his frightful head, and a sceptre in his hand. He kissed the Princess on the forehead, desired her to sit beside him on the costly throne; and then the music immediately began. Large black grasshoppers played the jews-harp, and an owl beat his breast instead of a drum, as he had no other. Little fiends, each one with a Will-o'-the-Wisp in his cap, danced to this music about the hall. Not one of the company discovered the man who had placed himself immediately behind the throne, whence he could hear and see all that happened.

The courtiers of the mountain-dwarf now entered the saloon; they did so as if they were persons of immense importance; but

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any one a little skilled in human nature could easily see that they did not feel happy. They were, moreover, nothing but broom-sticks, with cabbages for heads; into which the goblin had conjured some life, and had them dressed in embroidered clothes. However, that was of no consequence; as they were only there for parade and show.

When the dancing had lasted some time, the Princess told the mountain-sprite that she had got another suitor; and asked him at last on what she should think, when he came to the palace next morning to guess her thoughts.

"I'll tell you, my daughter," said the old goblin. "Choose something quite simple; then he will be least likely to guess it. Think, for example, of your shoe: he'll never dream of that. Then off with his head, and don't forget to bring his eyes with you to-morrow night; for they are what I am very fond of."

The Princess bowed low, and assured him she would not forget the eyes when she came again. Then the Sprite opened the

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mountain, and the Princess returned to the palace through the air; but John's companion followed close behind, and gave her such a whipping with his rod that she complained loudly of the violent hail-storm, till at last she slipped in at her chamber-window. But the stranger returned to his inn, where John still lay fast asleep, took his wings from his shoulders, and went to bed; for he was, no doubt, pretty tired after so fatiguing a journey.

It was still early when John awoke. He left his bed, and his companion got up too, and told him he had dreamed that night of the Princess and her shoe; wherefore he begged him to ask the Princess if it were not of her shoe she had thought.

"I can just as well say the shoe as anything else," said John. "Perhaps what you dreamed is right; for I have the firm conviction that God will help me out of this dilemma. Notwithstanding, I will wish you farewell; for should I not guess the Princess's thoughts, I shall never see you more."

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The two travelers then embraced each other, and John bent his steps towards the town and the palace. The festal hall was filled with people; the judges sat in large arm-chairs, with soft cushions on which they leaned their heads because they were obliged to think so much.

The old King got up as soon as he perceived John, and wiped his eyes with his white pocket-handkerchief. Then came the Princess. She was still more beautiful than yesterday, saluting every one in a most friendly manner, and, giving John her hand, said, "Good morrow, worthy friend."

Now, then, John was to say on what the Princess was thinking. Ah, how tenderly she looked at him! but as soon as she heard him utter the word "SHOE!" she turned pale, and her whole frame began to tremble. That, however, availed her but little; for John had really guessed her thoughts.

Well, how happy the old King was when he heard it! He turned head over heels for sheer joy, and all present applauded him

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and John, who, it was decided, had that day been victorious.

Equally pleased was his companion when he told him how lucky he had been in the adventure; but John folded his hands and thanked God for His gracious assistance, Who, he confidently hoped, would aid him in his need the other two days. On the very next morning he was to guess the thoughts of the Princess for the second time.

The evening of this day passed like the preceding one. When John was asleep, his comrade fled off to the Princess, and followed her to the enchanted mountain. This time he had provided himself with two rods, and whipped the poor Princess much more severely than the first time. No one saw him, yet he heard and understood all that passed in the hall of the mountain-dwarf. The Princess was to think this time on her glove, and he told it to John as if he had had a dream. John was enabled, therefore, to guess rightly on what the Princess had thought the second time, which caused undissembled joy at the palace.

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Every body at court now turned head over heels, as the King had done the first day; but the Princess lay on a sofa, and would not speak a word.

Now, then, the third day was to be got over,—should that turn out well, then John would not only have the beautiful Princess for his wife, but would rule over the whole kingdom when the old King was dead. But could he not guess the Princess's thoughts, he would lose his life, and the Dwarf of the mountain would devour his eyes.

This evening John went to bed earlier than usual, said his prayers, and fell into a quiet sleep. His comrade, on the contrary, fastened his swan's wings on again, buckled his sabre round him, and put three rods into his pocket. Then off he flew to the palace.

The night was as dark as pitch; there was such a violent storm that the tiles flew off the roofs, and the trees in the Princess's park waved to and fro with the rattling skeletons of the princes that had been hanged. It lightened fearfully, and the thunders rolled so dreadfully that it was but

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one continued war throughout the whole night.

Now the window of the bedchamber flew open, and the Princess soared through the wildly agitated air. The paleness of death was on her face; but she laughed at the storm, and thought it was not yet half bad enough. Her garments fluttered in the wind, and the man whipped her so unmercifully with his threefold rod that the blood flowed, and she could at last hardly fly any further. Finally she reached the mountain.

"It hails and it storms," said she; "never have I flown in such a tempest!"

"It is possible to have too much of a good thing," answered the goblin.

Then the Princess related to him how John had rightly guessed her thoughts a second time as well. Should he be successful on the third day, the victory was his; she would no longer be able to come to the mountain, nor could carry on any more witchcraft; and this disturbed her exceedingly.

"He shall never guess on what you think

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this time," said the fiend. "I will find out something on which he never thought: if he did, he must be a greater sorcerer than I am. Now let us be merry."

Saying these words, he seized the Princess by the hand, danced with her round the hall, and all the little imps and wills-o'-the-wisp followed his example. The red spiders ran up and down the wall, so that they looked like flowers of fire; the owl beat his drum, the cricket sighed, and the black grasshoppers played the jews-harp; in short, there was a regular witches' ball.

When the imps had danced enough, the Princess prepared to depart, for she feared she might be missed at the palace. The Dwarf of the mountain said he would accompany her, that he might enjoy her company the longer.

They flew now through the air; but the man made such good use of his three rods, that the mountain-imp confessed he had never been in such a hail-storm before.

Arrived at the palace, he bade the Princess farewell, and whispered in her ear,

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"Think of my head!" But the man heard the words; and just as the Princess slipped into her bedchamber, and the imp turned round to go to his enchanted mountain, the stranger seized him by his black beard, and with the sabre hewed off his disgusting head close to his shoulders. The trunk he threw into the sea as food for the fishes; but the head he dipped in the water, and then tied it up in a silken handkerchief. He carried it home with him to the inn, and laid down to sleep.

On the following morning he handed the kerchief to John, begging him, however, not to open it before the Princess had proposed her question.

The last day the large hall of the palace was so filled with people that they could not all find room enough, and they were therefore obliged to stand on each other. The councillors sat as before in their easy arm-chairs, bolstered with cushions of eider-down; and the old king was dressed in a new suit; and the crown and the sceptre had been rubbed up and polished tremendously.

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But the Princess was quite pale; she was dressed in black, as though she were to attend a funeral.

"On what am I thinking at this moment?" asked she of John, who at the same instant opened his handkerchief, and was terribly frightened when he saw the horrid head of the mountain-imp within it. All the spectators shuddered with dread at the sight; and the Princess sat as though she were petrified,—she was unable to utter a word. At last, however, she rose from her seat and gave John her snow-white hand; for he had now for the third time guessed her thoughts aright. Without looking at any one, she merely said the words, "You are now my lord; this evening we will hold the wedding."

"Now that pleases me," said the old King; "and so it shall be." Then the whole assembly shouted "Hurrah!" the military band played through the streets, the bells rang, and the confectioners took their little sugar-work figures out of mourning: there was nothing but joy in the town.

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Three whole roasted oxen, stuffed with ducks and fowls, were carried out to the market-place, where any one could eat of them and drink wine from the fountains. Whoever bought a roll at a baker's got half-a-dozen plum-cakes into the bargain.

In the evening the whole town was illuminated; the soldiers fired off cannons, and the boys in the street crackers; everywhere was eating and drinking without end; while at the palace the ladies and gentlemen danced together, and far below in the town was heard the song:

"Now let us be merry, and dance and sing:
Let's drink to the health of our good old king,
Now, then, pretty lasses, come join the round,
The fiddles are playing, the tabors sound;
And he who's not merry to-night, ha! ha!
We'll soon wake him up with a tra-la-la!"

But the Princess was still a witch, and did not care for John. His companion knew this; so he gave him three feathers out of the wings of the swan, and a little phial with some drops, and desired him to have a bath

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placed near the bridal bed. Then when the Princess had retired to rest he was to give her a gentle push, so that she fell into the bath; and then he was to hold her under the water three several times, having beforehand thrown in the three feathers and the drops. After this the Princess would be disenchanted, and would love him very much.

John did what his faithful companion had desired him: 'tis true, the Princess screamed aloud when he put her under water, and struggled with hands and feet. When she came up the first time she was like a jet-black swan, with fiery eyes; the second time she was changed into a white swan, only a black ring was round her neck. John now said a prayer, and held the bird under water for the third time: immediately it was changed into the most beautiful Princess; she had become even more beautiful than she was before, and thanked her young consort with tears in her eyes for having freed her from enchantment.

The following morning was devoted to re-

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ceiving the visits of those who came to congratulate the newly married couple. The King appeared with the rest with all his court, and there was wassailing and rejoicing throughout the day.

At last John's former traveling-companion appeared to congratulate him; but he had his staff in his hand, and carried the knapsack at his back. John went to meet him, embraced him before all the assembly, and begged him pressingly not to go away, but to remain with him for ever, that he might share the good fortune which he owed to him with so dear a friend. But the stranger shook his head and said, "My good John, that cannot be, for my time is at an end; I have but paid my debt. Do you remember the dead man whom wicked persons would not allow to rest peaceably in his coffin? You gave all that you possessed that he might find rest in the grave.—That corpse am I!"

As he said this he vanished.

The wedding-festivities lasted a whole month; John and the Princess loved each

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other dearly, and the old King lived many years and joyous days with his children, and let his merry grandchildren ride upon his knee, and play with the polished sceptre. But John reigned over the whole land, and became at last a very powerful monarch.

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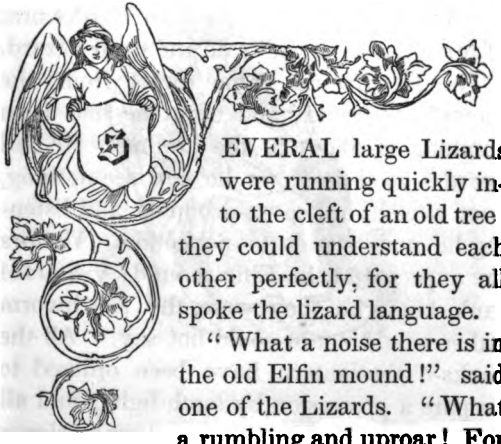
The Elfin Mound.



SEVERAL large Lizards were running quickly into the cleft of an old tree; they could understand each other perfectly, for they all spoke the lizard language.

"What a noise there is in the old Elfin mound!" said one of the Lizards. "What a rumbling and uproar! For two nights I have not been able to close my

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eyes, and might just as well have had a toothache, for then I certainly should not have slept."

"There is a something going on there," said the other Lizard. "They let the mound stand on four red poles till the crowing of the cock, to have it thoroughly aired; and the Elfin damsels have learnt new dances, in which there is some stamping. A something is going on, I'm sure."

"Yes; I have spoken to an Earthworm of my acquaintance," said the third Lizard. "The Earthworm came direct from the mound, where day and night he had been rummaging about in the ground. He had heard a good deal; for he can see nothing, poor wretch, but eaves-dropping and listening he understands to perfection. Visitors are expected at the Elfin mound; visitors of rank, but who they were, the Earthworm either would not or could not say. All the Jacks-o'-the-lantern have been ordered to prepare a procession by torch-light; and all the silver and gold, of which there is plenty

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in the Elfin mound, will be polished and laid in the moonshine."

"But who can the strangers be!" said all the Lizards. "What can be going on? Listen! what a humming and buzzing!"

At the same instant the Elfin mound opened, and an elderly Elfin damsel, without a back, but for the rest very respectably dressed, came tripping forth. It was the old Elfin King's housekeeper; she was distantly related to him, and wore an amber heart on her forehead. Her feet were so nimble—trip—trap—trip—trap!—how she skipped along, right away to the moor to the Night-raven.

"You will be invited to the Elfin mound, and that to-night," said she. "But would you not do us a great favor, and take charge of the invitations? As you do not give parties yourself, you must do us this service. Strangers of high rank are coming to us; magicians of no small importance, let me tell you; and so the old Elfin King wants to show himself off to advantage."

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"Who is to be invited?" asked the Night-raven.

"Why, to the grand ball every body may come; men even, if they do but speak in their sleep, or are able to do something in our way. But the principal banquet is to be very select; those of the first rank only are to be invited. I have had a long discussion with the Elfin King; for, according to my notions, we cannot even ask ghosts. The Sea-god and his daughters must be invited first; 'tis true, they don't like much coming on dry land, but they will have probably a wet stone to sit upon, or maybe something better still; and then, I think, they will not refuse for this once. We must have the old Mountain Dwarfs of the first class, with tails; the Elf of the Brook, and the Brownie; and then, I think, we must not omit the Swart Elf, and the Skeleton Horse: they belong, it is true, to the clergy, who are not of our sort; however, 'tis their office, and they are, morever, nearly related to us, and are continually paying us visits."

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"Caw!" said the Night-raven, and flew away to invite the company.

The Elfin maidens were already dancing on the Elfin mound: they danced with long shawls, woven of haze and moonshine; and to all who like this sort of dancing, it seems pretty.

In the centre of the Elfin mound was the great hall, splendidly ornamented; the floor was washed with moonshine, and the walls were rubbed with witches' fat, so that they shone in the light like tulip-leaves. In the kitchen there were a great quantity of frogs among the dishes; adders' skins, with little children's fingers inside; salad of mushroom-seed; wet mice's snouts and hemlock; beer, from the brewery of the old Witch of the Moor; sparkling saltpetre wine from a grave-cellar,—all very substantial eating: rusty nails and church-window glass were among the delicacies and kick-shaws.

The Old Elfin King had his golden crown polished with pounded slate-pencil. It was the pencil of the head-scholar; and to obtain this one is very difficult for the Elfin King.

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They hung up the curtains in the bedchamber, and fastened them with adder spittle. There was, indeed, a humming and a buzzing in the Elfin mound!

"Now we must perfume the place with singed hair and pig's bristles; and then I think I shall have done my share of the business," said the little Elfin damsel.

"Dear papa," said the least of the daughters, "shall I now know who the high visitors are?"

"Well then," said he, "I suppose I must tell you. Two of my daughters are to show themselves off, in order to get married. Two will certainly be married. The aged Mountain Elf of Norway, who lives in the old Dovre-field, and possesses many craggy castles, and a gold-mine too,—which is a better thing than one imagines,—is coming here with his two sons; and they are to choose themselves wives. The hoary Elf is an honest old Norwegian, merry and straightforward. I have known him since many a long day, when we drank together to better acquaintance, and good fellowship. He

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came here to fetch his wife,—she is dead now,—who was the daughter of the Rock-King. Oh, how I long to see the old northern Elf! His sons, people say, are coarse, blustering fellows; but maybe one wrongs them, and when older they will improve."

"And when will they come?" asked his daughter.

"That depends on wind and weather," said the Elfin King. "They travel economically; they will come here by water. I wish they would go through Sweden; but the old gentleman has no inclination that way. He does not keep pace with the time; and that I can't bear."

At the same moment two Jacks-o'-the-lantern came hopping in, one faster than the other, and for that reason one was first.

"They're coming! they're coming!" cried they.

"Give me my crown; and let me stand in the moonshine," said the Elfin King.

The daughters held up their long shawls and bowed to the earth.

There stood the hoary Mountain Elf,

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with a crown of hardened icicles and polished fir-cones on his head, and wrapped up in a mantle of fur and boots of the same. His sons, on the contrary, went with open throats, for they disdained the cold.

"Is that a mound?" asked the lesser of the youths, pointing to Elfin-home. "In Norway we call such a thing a hole."

"Boy," said the father, "a mound rises upwards, and a hole goes inwards. Have you no eyes in your head?"

Now they went in to the Elfin mound, where there was very choice company, certainly; and had come together with such speed, one might have thought they had been borne thither on the breeze; however, the arrangements for every one were neat and pretty. The sea-folk sat at table in large water-butts; and they said they felt just as if they were at home. All observed good manners at the table, except the two little Norwegian Mountain Elves, who put their feet on the board, for they thought that all they did was becoming.

"Take your feet away from the plates,"

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said the old Elf; and then they obeyed, although not immediately. They tickled the ladies next them with fir-cones; then they pulled off their boots, to be more at ease, and gave them to the ladies to hold for them; but their father was very different. He told about the proud Norwegian rocks, and of the waterfalls, which, covered with foam, dashed downwards, raging and roaring like thunder; he told about the salmon, that leaps up against the falling waters, when the Spirit of the flood plays on her golden harp. He related about the clear winter nights, when the bells on the sledges jingle, and the youths run with flaming torches over the smooth ice, which is so transparent that they could see how affrighted the fishes were beneath their feet. He, indeed, could recount so that one saw and heard the things he described; when, huzza! all of a sudden, the old Elf gave one of the Elfin damsels a smacking kiss; and yet they were not even distantly related.

The Elfin maidens were now to dance, simple as well as stamping dances; and then

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came the most difficult one of all, the so-called "Dance out the dance." Confound it! their legs grew so long, one did not know which was the beginning nor which was the end—one could not distinguish legs from arms, all was twirling about in the air like saw-dust; and they went whizzing round to such a degree that the Skeleton Horse grew quite sick, and was obliged to leave the table.

"Brrrrr!" said the grey-headed Elf, "that's a regular Highland fling, as it's called. But what can they do besides spinning about like a whirlwind?"

"That you shall see," said the King, calling the youngest of his daughters. She was as delicate and fair as moonlight, and was the daintiest of all the sisters. She put a white wand in her mouth, and vanished. That was her art.

But the old Mountain Elf said, "This was an art he should not at all like in his wife, nor did he think his sons would either."

The other could walk beside her own self,

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as though she had a shadow, which is a thing Elves never have.

The third one's talent was of a very different kind; she had learned in the brewery of the Witch of the Moor, and she knew how to lard alder-wood with glow-worms.

"She would make a good housewife," said the Mountain Elf, blinking, for he did not at all like drinking so much.

Then came the fourth Elfin maiden; she had a large golden harp, and when she touched the first string, every body lifted up the left foot, for the Elves are all left-sided; and when she touched the next, everybody was forced to do whatever she pleased.

"That is a dangerous damsel," said the Mountain Elf; but both his sons went out of the Elfin mound, for they were tired of it.

"What can the next daughter do!" asked the old Elf.

"I have learned to love the Norwegians," said she; "and I will not marry unless I can go to Norway."

But the youngest of the sisters whispered into the old Elfin's ear, "She only says that,

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because she has heard, in an old Norwegian rhyme, that when even the world is at an end, the rocks of Norway will stand firm; and that's the reason she wants to go there, for she is greatly afraid of death."

"Ho! ho!" said the old Elf; "that's the way the wind blows, is it! But what can the seventh and last do?"

"The sixth comes before the seventh," said the Elfin King, for he knew how to count; but the sixth at first would not come forward.

"I can do nothing except tell people the truth," said she. "No one troubles about me, and I have enough to do to get my shroud ready."

Now came the seventh and last. And what could she do? She could tell as many fairy-tales as she chose.

"Here are my five fingers," said the old Mountain Elf. "For each one tell me a story."

And the Elfin maiden took hold of him by the wrist, and he laughed till he was almost choked; and when she came to the

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finger that wore a golden ring, just as if it knew that matrimony was going on, the old Elf said, "Hold fast what you have! The hand is yours! I will take you myself to wife!"

And the Elfin maiden said that the fairy-tale to the ring-finger and to the little finger were wanting.

"Oh, we'll hear them in winter," said the old Elf; "and about the fir-tree too, and about the birch, and the gifts of the wood-nymphs, and about the crackling frost. You shall have opportunities enough of telling stories, for no one understands that yonder. And there we will sit in our rocky dwelling, where the pine-torch is burning, and where we drink mead out of the golden horns of the old Norwegian kings; I got some as a present from the Water-spirit. And when we are sitting so together, Garbo will come to pay us a visit, and he will sing to you all the songs of the mountain maidens. How merry we shall be! The salmon will leap in the waterfall, and dash against the walls of rock; but he will not be able to

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come in to us, after all! Yes, yes; one leads a happy, comfortable life in dear old Norway! But where are the boys?"

Where were they? Why, they were running about the fields, blowing out the wills-o'-the wisp that were coming quite orderly to have a procession with torches.

"What's all this harum-scarum about?" said the old Elf. "I have taken a step-mother for you; methinks now you may choose a wife too."

But they said they liked speechifying and boon companionship better, and had no taste for matrimony; and so they made speeches, tossed off their glasses, and turned them topsy-turvy, to show that they were quite empty. They then pulled off their coats, and lay down on the table to sleep. But the old Elf danced round the room with his young bride, and exchanged boots with her; for that is much more genteel than exchanging rings.

"The cock is crowing!" said the elderly damsel who attended to the housekeeping.

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"We must now bolt the shutters, lest the sun should spoil our complexions."

And then the mound closed.

The Lizards ran about up and down the cleft tree, and one said to the other, "How much I like the old Mountain Elf!"

"I like the merry boys better," said the Earthworm; but then he could not see, poor wretch!

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The Flying Trunk.

THERE was once, in a town, which it would now perhaps be hard to find on the map, a merchant, who was so rich that he could have paved the whole street, and almost a little alley into the bargain, with silver coin; but he did not do it: he knew better what to do with his money; and when he spent a shilling he gained a crown, so good a trader was he; and——he died.

His son inherited all his money. But he

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led a merry life, went every evening to the masquerade, made kites of bank-notes, and took guineas instead of stones, to play at Duck-and-Drake with on the lake.

It was, therefore, no wonder if the money began to disappear, which it very soon did; so that at last he had only two-pence in his pocket, and no clothing but a pair of slippers and an old dressing-gown. His friends did not trouble themselves about him any more, now that they could not even walk across the street with him; but one of these, who was a good-natured fellow and had a kind heart, sent him an old trunk, and said, "Pack up your things, and be off!"

That was all very well, but he had nothing to pack up, so he got into the trunk himself.

'Twas a droll sort of a trunk! As soon as one pressed the lock, it could fly: the merchant's son did so; and, halloa! up flew the trunk with him, straight up the chimney, and away into the clouds, farther and farther off. The bottom cracked, and he was very uneasy; for if the bottom had

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given way, a pretty tumble he would have had! But nothing of the sort happened.

Well, in this way he reached Turkey. He hid the trunk in a wood, under the dry leaves, and then went towards the town; for this he could very well do, as among the Turks every body walked about in dressing-gown and slippers.

Now on his way to the town, he met a nurse with a little child. "I say, nurse," said he, "what castle is that yonder with high windows, just outside the walls?"

"The King's daughter lives there," said she. "It has been foretold that she will become very unhappy on account of a lover; and so no one dare come near her when the King and Queen are not present."

"Thank you," said the merchant's son; and he went out into the wood, seated himself in his trunk, flew up to the roof, and crept through the window to the Princess's apartments.

She lay on a sofa and slept. She was so beautiful that the son of the merchant could not help giving her a kiss. This awoke

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her, nor was she a little afraid; but he said he was a messenger sent by the Prophet of the Turks, who had come to her through the air to honor her with his presence; and this satisfied her.

So he sat down, and told her stories about her eyes: these were the most beautiful dark lakes; and thoughts swam about in them like mermaids. And he told her a story about her forehead: this was a mountain of snow, with glorious vaulted halls. And then he told her about the storks and the sweet little children.

They were such pretty stories; and then he made the Princess an offer, and she immediately said "Yes."

"But you must come here on Saturday," said she. "The King and the Queen are coming to me to tea at six, as the clock strikes; they will be so glad to hear that I am to marry a messenger of the Prophet! But take care to have a very pretty fairy-tale to relate; for my parents like that above any thing. My mother likes it to be very moral, and very aristocratic; and my

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father likes it to be merry, so that one may have a hearty laugh."

"Very well; I shall bring no other bridal gift than a fairy-tale," said he.

And so they parted; but before he went, the Princess gave him a very rich sabre, the sheath of which was studded with gold; and a very acceptable present it was.

Now he flew off, bought himself a new dressing-gown, and a few hours afterwards he was sitting out in the wood, composing the fairy-tale, which was to be ready by Saturday evening; and composing, let me tell you, is no easy matter.

But at last it was ready; and Saturday too was come. The King, the Queen, and all the court drank tea that evening at the Princess's! The suitor was extremely well received.

"Will you relate us a fairy-tale?" said the Queen when tea was over; "one that has a profound meaning, and that is instructive—"

"Yes, and let it be one that is laughable too," said the King.

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"Yes, certainly," said he, and began his tale; and now you must listen very attentively to the story about

The Bundle of Matches.

There was once upon a time a bundle of Matches, and they were very proud of their high descent. Their genealogical tree—that is to say, the great fir tree, of which each of them was a chip—had been once a very stately old tree in the forest. But now these Matches lay on the shelf between a flint and steel and an old iron saucepan, and to them they told most wonderful stories about their younger days.

"Ah, while we were still on the green bough, then were we indeed on the green bough!" said they. "Pearl tea morning and evening,—that was the dew; the sun shone on us the whole day, when he did shine; and all the little birds were obliged to amuse us with many songs or touching sto-

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ries. We could easily see that we were rich; for the other trees were dressed in green only in summer, whilst our family possessed the means of wearing green both winter and summer. But the wood-cutters came, that was the Great Revolution, and our family was divided and split up: he whom we looked upon as our chief support got a place as a mainmast in a large ship, that could sail round the world if it liked; and the other branches were placed in various situations: and now our vocation is to give light; and therefore we, people of high pedigree as we are, have come here into the kitchen."

"Ah! my fate has been very different," said the iron saucepan, near which the matches lay. "From the very moment that I came into the world I've been scoured and boiled, oh, how often! I always side with the respectable and conservative; and belong, in reality, to the very first in the house. My sole pleasure is to lie down, nice and clean, after dinner, and to have a little rational talk with my comrades; but if I except the

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bucket, that now and then goes into the yard, we live here in a very retired and quiet life. Our only newsmonger is the coal-scuttle; but he talks so demagogically about 'the people' and 'the government,' that a short time ago an old earthen pot was so shocked at his conversation that it dropped down and broke into a thousand pieces. Oh, he belongs to the Radicals, let me tell you."

"Now you are talking too much," said the Flint, and it struck against the steel so that the sparks flew out.

"Shall we not have a merry evening?"

"Yes; let us talk about who is of highest rank and most genteel," said the Matches.

"No; I have no wish to talk about myself," said the earthenware Dish; "let us have a refined and sentimental evening. We will all tell things we have seen and gone through. I will begin. I will relate a tale of every-day life: one can fancy one's self so well in similar situations, and that is so interesting.

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"On the shores of the Baltic, beneath the Danish beeches"——

"That is a splendid beginning!" said all the Plates; "that will certainly be a very interesting story!"

"There, in a quiet family, I passed my youth: the furniture was polished, the floor washed, and clean muslin curtains were put up every fortnight."

"What an interesting story you are telling us!" said the Duster. "One hears in a moment that it is a young lady who speaks, such an air of purity breathes in every word."

"Yes, that one does feel indeed," said the Water-pail, much moved, and in such broken accents that there was quite a splash on the floor.

And the Dish went on with the story, and the end was as good as the beginning.

All the Plates rattled with delight; and the Duster took some green parsley off the dresser, and crowned the Dish, for he knew this would annoy the others; and, thought

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he, if I crown her to-day, she will crown me to-morrow.

"Now let us dance!" said the Tongs, beginning immediately; and, good heavens, how she could fling her leg up in the air, almost as high and as gracefully as Mademoiselle Ellsler! The old Arm-chair-covering in the corner burst at the sight.

"Am I not to be crowned now?" said the Tongs; and so forthwith she got a laurel-wreath too.

"What a low set!" said the Matches to themselves.

It was now the Tea-urn's turn to sing something; but she said she had taken cold, indeed, she could only sing when excited; but that was nothing but pride; for she *would* only sing when standing on the drawing-room table among ladies and gentlemen.

Behind, in the window, sat an old Pen, that the maid used to write with. There was nothing remarkable about it, except that it was too deeply immersed in ink; but that was just what it was proud of, and

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made a fuss about. "If the tea-urn will not sing," it said, "why, she may leave it alone: but there is a nightingale in a cage; she can sing. It is true she has been taught nothing. However, this evening we will speak ill of nobody."

"I find it most improper," said the Tea-kettle, who was kitchen chorus-singer, and step-brother to the Tea-urn—"I find it most improper that such a foreign bird should be patronized. Is that patriotic? I will ask the Coal-scuttle, and let him decide the matter."

"As to me, I am vexed," said the latter; "thoroughly vexed! Is this the way to spend the evening? Would it not be far better to turn the whole house upside-down, and to establish a new and natural order of things? In this way each one would find his proper place, and I would undertake to direct the change. That would be something like fun for us."

"Yes, let us kick up a row!" cried all at once.

At the same moment the door opened: it

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was the house-maid! All were silent; not one dared to utter a word. Yet there was not a single grease-pot but knew what he COULD do, and of what consequence he was.

"Yes, if I had chosen," thought they, "fine work there would have been this evening!"

The maid took the matches to get a light. Bless us, how they sputtered, and then stood all in a blaze!

"Now may every body see," thought they, "that we are first in rank. How we shine! What lustre! What light!"—and so saying, they went out.

"That was a capital tale," said the Queen; "I felt as if I were in the kitchen the whole time. Yes, you certainly shall have our daughter."

"To be sure," said the King; "next Monday you shall have our daughter."

All was fixed for the wedding; and the evening before the whole town was illumi-

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nated: nuts and cakes were flung among the people; and the boys in the street stood upon tiptoe, and shouted "Hurrah!" It was magnificent!

"I must also do something to give still greater splendor to the festival," said the merchant's son; and he bought rockets, squibs, crackers, and all imaginable fireworks, seated himself in his trunk, and flew up with them into the air.

Hurrah! that was a sight! how it blazed!

Every Turk, when he beheld it, gave such a jump, that his slippers flew over his ears; for an appearance in the air like this they had never seen before. They now comprehended that it really must be a messenger of the Prophet who was to have the Princess.

As soon as the merchant's son with his trunk was again in the wood, he said to himself, "I think I'll just go into the town, and hear how it looked." And very natural it was that he wished to know.

Well to be sure! What stories the people told! Each one whom he asked had

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seen it in his way; but they all had thought it superb.

"I saw the Prophet himself," said one; "he had eyes like gleaming stars, and a beard like foaming water."

"He flew by in a mantle of fire," said another. "The dearest little cherubs peeped out from beneath its folds."

True enough he heard the most wonderful things; and on the following day he was to celebrate his wedding.

He now went back to the wood to get into his trunk—but where was it?

The trunk was burnt. A spark from the fireworks had fallen into it unobserved, had set fire to it; and there the trunk lay in ashes! Now the poor merchant's son could fly no longer, and was unable to get to his betrothed.

She stood the whole day on the roof waiting for him; she is waiting there still. As for him, he goes about the world telling stories; but they are not so amusing as the one of the Bundle of Matches.

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Little Viggo.

TRANSLATED BY MARY HOWITT.

MY little Viggo wilt thou ride on horseback?
Then seat thee on my knee, my first, my best;
I am, like thee, a child in soul and body,
Then let us play till thou must go to rest.

See, I will be thy playmate as thou willest;
I will forget my tears, my heart-wrung sighs;
Let me upon thy rosy cheeks shower kisses,
And let me gaze into thy dear, brown eyes.

Now let me see how tall thou art, my jewel!
—And what a soft round little hand is thine!
Sweet smiles are nestling in each lovely dimple,
And O, thy mouth is sweet, thou dove of mine.

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Little Viggo.

Each little flower thou lovest as thy brother,
  And as a friend thou tell'st it that and this;
The whole wide world to thee is in thy mother,
  And on her knee thou findest Eden's bliss.

Come, I will tell thee now a pretty story,
  All in this twilight of the eventide,
Will sing a low, sweet song until thou slumberest
  My little Viggo, my delight and pride!

Perhaps when thou art older, my beloved,
  And I have journeyed to the land of shade,
When the green sods are piled above my coffin,
  Then thou may'st sing the low, sad songs I made—

May'st think of her who oft and oft has borne thee
  Within her arms, as loving mothers do;—
The world it will forget me and my singing,
  And how I loved! wilt thou forget them too?

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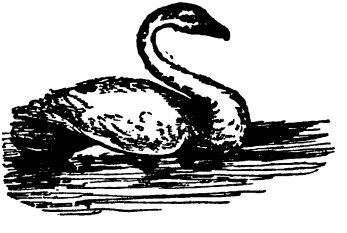
Part XX.

The Ugly Duck,

AND OTHER TALES.



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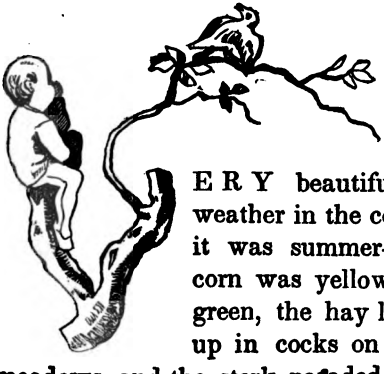
The Agly Duck.



ERY beautiful was the weather in the country, for it was summer-time; the corn was yellow, the oats green, the hay lay heaped up in cocks on the green meadows, and the stork paraded about on

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his long red legs, and talked Egyptian, for that was the language he had learnt from his mother.

All round the fields and meadows were great woods, and in the midst of the woods were deep lakes—yes, it was really most beautiful in the country!

And there stood an old manor-house right in the sunshine, with deep moats all round it, and on the walls great burdock-leaves were growing, that hung down into the water; they were so high that little children could stand under the largest of them. The place was as wild and unfrequented as the thickest part of the forest.

And here sat a duck on her nest;—she was to hatch her eggs and get a brood of ducklings; but it lasted so long, she was almost tired of it, important as it was; and she had, besides, few visitors. The other ducks preferred swimming about in the moats and ponds in the garden, to sitting with her on the green bank and chatting under the dock-leaves.

At last one egg cracked, and then ano-

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ther: "Piep! piep!" they cried; all the eggs had grown alive, and one head popped out after the other. "Quack, quack," said she; and then the ducklings all broke open their shells, thrust out their heads as well as they were able, and peeped about under the green leaves. And their mother let them look as much as they liked; for green is good for the eyes.

"How immense the world is!" said the little ones; for the room they had now to move in was, to be sure, quite another playground to what it was when sitting in the egg-shell.

"Do you think that this is the whole world?" said their mother. "It extends far towards the other side of the garden, straight to the pastor's field: but there I have never been. You surely are all here!" And now she rose, though in so doing, in spite of all her care, her little scrambling progeny were regularly upset. "No, I have not all! The largest egg is lying there still. How long is this to last! I am really growing quite

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tired of it." And then she sat on the nest again.

"Well, how are you getting on?" asked an old duck that came up to pay her friend a visit.

"It lasts so long with one egg," said the other; "it will never open. The shell must be too hard for the poor little thing to make a hole through it. But now you shall see the others. They are the nicest little ducklings that I have seen in all my life! They are all so like their father—the good-for-nothing fellow!—he has never been once to see me!"

"Let me look at the egg that will not open," said the old duck. "You may be sure it is a turkey's egg! I was deceived once in the same way myself: and I had plague and trouble enough with the young ones; for they are shy of water, let me tell you; I could not get them to go in. I called and scolded; but it was all of no use. Let me see the egg. Ah, truly!—that's a turkey's egg! Let it lie; and teach the other little ones to swim."

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"I will sit on it a little longer," said the Duck; "I have been sitting so long, that I may as well devote the rest of the harvest-time to it."

"You may do what you like, for me," said the old duck, as she waddled away. "The changeling will give her enough to do," thought she, as she went.

At last the great egg burst. "Piep, piep," said the little one, and tumbled out of the shell; but how large and ugly it was! The Duck looked at it: "That's a tremendous great creature, however," said she; "none of the others look like it. That can't be a turkey-chick, surely! Well, we'll soon find out. It shall go into the water, even if I am obliged to shove it in, we will see whether it is a real duck and can dive and swim properly."

The following day it was wonderfully fine weather, the sun shone so cheeringly on all the green leaves. So Mamma Duck went down to the moat with all her family at her heels, and, platsch! in she went into the water. "Quack! quack!" said she;

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and plump into the water went one duckling after the other. Not one wanted to stay behind. The water went over their heads; but they came up again directly, and swam in the prettiest way imaginable: their feet moved of themselves in the water, and all were there; even the hideous grey one swam too.

"No, that's no turkey!" said the old Duck; "only look how prettily it uses its legs; how upright it holds itself!—that child is my own! In reality it's quite pretty, if one looks at it well.—Quack! quack! now come with me, I will take you into the world, and introduce you into the poultry-yard. But keep close to me, that no one may tread upon you; and take care of the cats."

And so they came into the poultry-yard. There was a terrible hurley-burley going on there just then; for two families were quarreling about the remains of an eel, which nobody but the cat got, after all.

"Behold, my children, such is the way of the world," said Mamma Duck, and

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licked her bill; for she had a taste for fried eels too. "Now use your legs," said she; "pay attention, keep together, and bow to the old duck there yonder,—she is of higher rank than all the rest. She is of Spanish race; which accounts for her dignified appearance and noble manners—and, look! she has a red rag round her leg; that is something wonderfully beautiful, and the greatest distinction that a duck can have: it signifies that she is not to be given away, and that she may be known by men and animals. Turn out your toes! a well-bred duckling straddles his legs far apart, like his parents! Look—so! Now give your neck a graceful curve, as I do, and say 'Quack!'"

And they did as they were told; but the other ducks all round stared at them, and said quite aloud, "Now look, we are to have this tribe too, as if there were not enough of us already! we really could do very well without such a set as this; and only look, how ugly one is!—we wont suffer that one here." And immediately a saucy

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drake flew at the little grey-green intruder, and bit him in the neck.

"Let it alone," said the mother; "it does no one any harm, and I will not have him ill-treated."

"Yes, but it is so large and strange-looking," replied the drake, "and therefore it shall be teased."

"Those are fine children that the mother has," said the old duck with the rag round her leg. "All handsome, except one: it has not turned out well. It is anything but perfect. I wish she could change it or hatch it over."

"That can't be done, your grace," said the mother; "besides, if it be not exactly pretty, it is a sweet child, and swims as well as one of the others; yes, even a little better. I think, in growing it will improve, or perhaps in time get less plump: it was long in the egg, and that's the reason it is a little awkward." And saying these words, she scratched the duckling in the nape of the neck, and smoothed down his thin green uniform where it was ruffled, and with her

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bill stroked the whole little personage into order wherever she could. "Besides it's a drake," added she; "and therefore it does not matter so much. I think it will be strong, though, and fight its way through the world."

"The others are nice little things!" said the old Spanish lady-duck. "Now make yourself quite at home here; and should you find an eel's head, or anything very nice of that sort, why, you can just bring it to me."

And then they felt quite at home.

But the poor young duck, that had come last out of the shell and looked so ugly, was bitten, and pecked, and teased, by ducks and fowls. "It's so large!" said they all; and the turkey-cock, that had spurs on when he came into the world, and therefore fancied himself an emperor, strutted about like a ship under full sail, went straight up to it, gobbled, and got quite red. The poor little duck hardly knew where to go, or where to stand: it was so sorrowful, because it was so ugly and was the ridicule of the

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whole poultry-yard, and this weighed heavy on his heart.

Thus passed the first day, and afterwards it grew worse and worse. The poor duck was hunted about by every one; even its brothers and sisters were cross to it, and always said, "I wish the cat would get you, you frightful creature!" and its mother in her sorrow for her suffering little one, said, "Would you were far from here!" And the ducks bit it, and the hens pecked at it, and the girl that fed the poultry kicked it with her foot.

So at last it made a desperate effort, and ran and flew over the hedge and out of the poultry-yard.

The little birds in the bushes started with affright. "That is because I am so ugly," thought the duck, and shut its eyes; but still ran on. At last it came to a great moor where wild ducks lived: here it lay the whole night, and was so tired and comfortless; while the full moon shone forth with such a smiling face that one might have thought she was laughing at the

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merry-hearted frogs as they leaped from the turf into the water and from the water on to the turf again, dancing about like so many elves.

In the morning up flew the wild ducks, and saw their new comrade: "What a comical little fellow! Who are you?" asked they; and our little duck turned itself on every side, and bowed to them all as well as it could.

"But you are tremendously ugly!" said the wild ducks. "However, that is of no consequence to us, if you don't marry into our family." The poor thing! It certainly never thought of marrying; it only wanted permission to lie among the reeds, and to drink the waters of the marsh.

So it lay there two whole days; on the third came a couple of wild geese, or rather ganders: it was not long since they had crept out of the egg, and that was the reason they were so pert.

"Hark ye, comrade," said they; "you are so ugly that we like you right well. Will you come with us, and be a bird of

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passage? Not far from here, on another moor, are some dear, sweet wild geese, as beautiful young ladies as ever said 'Gick-gack.' You might really do great things among them and make your fortune, you are so ugly!"

"Bang! bang!" was heard at the same moment, and both wild geese lay dead among the reeds, and the water was as red as blood: "bang! bang!" was heard again, and whole flocks of wild geese flew out of the rushes; and then the report was heard again.

There was a great shooting-excursion: the sportsmen lay all around the moor; indeed, some sat in the branches of the trees which spread over the heath; and the blue smoke floated like a cloud through the dark trees, and sank down to the very water; and the dogs spattered about in the marsh, —splash, splash! reeds and rushes were waving on all sides: it was a terrible fright for the poor duck! It turned its head to put it under its wing, when at the same moment a terribly large dog stood close be-

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side it; his tongue hanging far out of his mouth, and his eyes sparkling horribly. He opened his jaws just opposite our duck, showed his sharp teeth, and—splash!—away he went without touching it.

"Well, Heaven be praised!" sighed the duck; "I am so ugly that even a dog won't eat me!"

And now it lay quite still, while the iron hail rattled among the rushes, and shot after shot was heard.

At last all was quiet; but the poor little thing did not yet dare to lift its head: it waited many hours before it looked round, and then hastened away from the moor as quickly as possible. It ran over the fields and meadows, and there was such a violent storm of wind that it could hardly get along.

Towards evening the duck reached a little hut; it was so wretched a place that it could not determine on which side it should fall down, and therefore it remained standing. The poor bird crept as well as it could into the straw that covered the side of the

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hovel. The wind blustered so, and shook it so roughly, that it was obliged to sit on its tail to be able to oppose it, and it grew worse and worse. Just then it observed that the door had fallen off its hinges, and hung so much on one side that it could squeeze itself into the room; to be sure the hovel seemed to promise small store of comfort, but still it would be good shelter, after all, from the blustering weather; so in went the poor little duck.

Here dwelt an old woman with her tom-cat and her hen; and the cat, which she called her Mannikin, could put up his back and purr; yes, he could even make a cracking noise, but then you must stroke his fur the reverse way. The woman coaxingly called him her little son.

The hen had quite little short legs and therefore it was called Chickabiddy Short-shanks; she regularly laid good eggs, and the woman loved it as her own child. Peace and happiness were quite at home beneath the little tottering roof of straw, as they often are beneath many of the kind.

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In the morning they remarked directly the new guest; and the tom-cat began to mew, and the hen to cackle.

"What's the matter?" asked the old woman; but she did not see well, and so she thought the young duckling was a fat duck that had lost its way.

"That's something worth catching!" said she. "Now I can get duck's eggs, if only it be no drake. We must try."

And so the duck was taken on trial for three weeks; but no eggs appeared.

Now the tom-cat was master in the house, and the hen was mistress: and they always said, "WE AND THE WORLD;" for they thought that they were the half of the world, and by far the better half into the bargain. The duck thought there might be two opinions on that matter; but the hen would not allow this.

"Can you lay eggs?" asked she.

"No."

"Well, then, hold your tongue."

And the tom-cat said, "Can you put up

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your back, and purr, and make a cracking noise?"

"No."

"Well, then, you ought to have no opinion of your own, where sensible people are speaking."

And the duck sat sorrowfully in the corner, and was in a bad humor, with his two conceited companions, when suddenly it took it into its head to think about the fresh air and the sunshine; and it had such an inordinate longing to swim on the water, and to splash about in the yielding element, that it could not help, at last, telling the hen of it.

"What next, I wonder!" said the hen; "you have nothing to do, and so you sit brooding over such fancies! Lay eggs, or purr, and you'll forget them."

"But it is so delightful to swim on the water!" said the duck; "so delightful when it dashes over one's head, and one dives down to the very bottom!"

"Well, that must be a fine pleasure!" said the hen. "You are crazy, I think.

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Ask the cat, who is the cleverest fellow I know, if he would like to swim on the water, or perhaps to dive; to say nothing of myself. Ask our mistress, the old lady, and there is no one in the world cleverer than she is; do you think that she would much like to swim on the water, and for the water to dash over her head?"

"You don't understand me," said the duck.

"Understand indeed! If we don't understand you, who should do so? I suppose you won't pretend to be cleverer than the tom-cat or our mistress, to say nothing of myself? Don't behave in that way, child; but be thankful for all the kindness that has been shown you. Have you not got into a warm room, and have you not the society of persons from whom something is to be learned? But you are a blockhead, and it is tiresome to have anything to do with you. You may believe what I say, I am well disposed towards you; I tell you what is disagreeable, and it is by that one recognizes one's true friends. Now, then, just take

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the trouble to learn to purr or to make a cracking noise, or to lay eggs."

"I think I will go out into the wide world again," said the duckling.

"Well, then, go!" answered the hen.

And so the duck went, and began its wanderings anew. It left the hut without any reluctance, and hastened to the water that it had been pining for so long. It swam on the water, it dived down; but was disregarded by every animal on account of its ugliness.

The autumn now came on; the leaves in the green woods grew yellow and brown, the wind laid hold of them and danced them about; and it was cold up in the air, —the clouds, loaded with hail and snow, hung down heavily, and the crows sat on the fence and cried, "Caw, caw," from sheer cold; yes, it was enough to make one freeze to think of it;—and the poor duckling was certainly badly off.

One evening—the sun was setting most magnificently—there came a whole flock of large beautiful birds out of the bushes;

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never had the duck seen any thing so beautiful! They were of a brilliant white, with long slender necks: they were swans. They uttered a strange note, spread their superb long wings, and flew away from the cold countries to warmer lands, across the sea, to unfrozen lakes. They mounted so high, so very high! the little ugly duck felt indescribably—it turned round and round in the water like a mill-wheel, stretched out its neck towards them, and uttered a cry so loud and strange that it almost frightened itself. Oh, the beautiful birds! the happy birds! it could not forget them; and when it could see them no longer, it dived down to the very bottom of the water; and when it came up again, it was quite beside itself. The duckling did not know what the birds were called, nor whither they flew; yet it loved them as it had never yet loved any thing. It did not envy them; it could not ever think of wishing such beauty for itself: why, it would have been quite contented if it had been but tolerated in the poultry-yard, the poor ugly animal!

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And the winter was so cold! the duck was obliged to swim about on the water to keep it from freezing; but every night the opening in which it swam grew smaller and smaller. The coating of ice cracked with the frost; the duck was obliged to use its legs lustily to hinder the water from freezing entirely; but at last it was exhausted, it lay still faint and weary, and was frozen fast in the ice.

Early in the morning a peasant came by, who saw the duck, took pity on it, broke the ice in pieces with his wooden shoe, and carried it home to his wife.

Here it revived. The children wanted to play with it; but our duckling thought they wished to torment it, and in its fright, bounced right into the milk-pan,—so that the milk splashed about the room. The good woman screamed and wrung her hands; and then it flew into the tub where the butter was, and then into the meal-tub, and out again—but what a fright it looked now!

The woman shrieked, and tried to strike

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it with the tongs; and the children hunted it about, one over the other, in order to catch it, and laughed and shouted. It was fine fun for them; but not so to the poor little bird, who now, instead of being grey, was as white as flour could make him. It was a good thing that the door was open, and out the duck rushed among the bushes in the freshly fallen snow:—there it lay as in a dream.

But it would be too sad to relate all the suffering and misery which it had to endure through the hard winter. It lay on the moor under the rushes. But when the sun began to shine again more warmly, when the larks sang, and the lovely spring was come, then, all at once, it spread out its wings and rose in the air. They made a rushing noise, louder than formerly, and bore it onwards more vigorously; and, before it was well aware of it, it found itself in a garden, where the apple-trees were in blossom, and where the syringas sent forth their fragrance, and their long green branches hung down in the meandering rivulets.

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It was so beautiful; the freshness of spring was there: and just then three beautiful white swans came out of the thicket. They rustled their feathers, and swam on the water so lightly, oh, so very lightly! The duckling knew the superb creatures, and was seized with a strange feeling of sadness.

"To them will I fly," said it, "to the royal birds; they will kill me, because I, poor ugly creature, dare to approach them! But no matter! It is better to be killed by them than bitten by the ducks, pecked by the hens, kicked by the girl that feeds the chickens, and in winter to suffer so much." And it flew into the water, and swam towards the magnificent birds; they looked at him, and, with rustling plumes, sailed towards him.

"Kill me," said the poor creature, and bowed down its head to the water, and awaited death. But what did it see in the water! It saw beneath it its own likeness—but no longer that of an awkward grayish bird, ugly and displeasing—it was the figure of a swan!

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It is of no consequence being born in a farm-yard, if only it is in a swan's egg.

The good creature felt quite elevated by all the cares and disappointments it had endured; now it knew how to prize the splendor which began to shine around it. And the large swans swam beside it, and stroked it with their bills.

There were some little children running about in the garden; they threw bread into the water, and the youngest cried out:

"There is a new one!" and the other children shouted too, "Yes, a new one is come!"—and they clapped their hands and danced, and ran to tell their father and mother. And they threw bread and cake into the water, and every one said:

"The new one is the best! so young, and so beautiful!" And the old swans bowed their heads before it. Then the young one felt quite ashamed, and hid its head under its wing: it knew not what to do: it was too happy, but yet not proud, for a good heart is never proud.

It remembered how it had been persecuted

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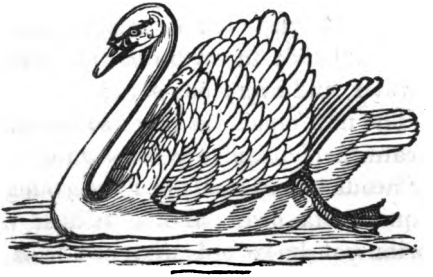
and derided, and now it heard all people say that it was the most beautiful of all beautiful birds. And the syringas bent down their branches to it in the water, and the sun shone so lovely and so warm. Then it shook its plumes, the slender neck was lifted up, and, from its very heart, it cried rejoicingly, "Never dreamed I of such happiness as this, in the days when I was the LITTLE UGLY DUCK!"



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Top and Ball.

TOGETHER in the drawer, among other playthings, lay a Top and a Ball; and the Top said to the Ball, "Let us be betrothed, as we are lying here in the same drawer and are thrown so much together." But the Ball, that was made of morocco leather, and thought a great deal of herself, like a delicate young lady, would not hear any thing of the sort.

On the following day came the little boy to whom the toys belonged: he painted the

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Top red and yellow, and drove a brass nail with a nice smooth head right into the middle of it: it looked quite splendid when the Top spun round.

"Only look at me," said he to the Ball. "What do you say now? Let us be betrothed, we are so fitted for each other: you can hop, and I can dance; happier than we two shall be, it would not be easy to find any body."

"Do you think so?" said the fine little Lady-Ball. "You probably don't know that my father and mother were morocco slippers, and that I have a piece of Spanish cork in my body."

"Yes, but I am made of mahogany," said the Top; "and I was turned by the Mayor with his own hand. He has a turning-lathe of his own, and he was very much amused while turning me."

"Can I depend on what you say?" said the Ball.

"May I never be whipped again if I am telling a story!" answered the Top.

"What you say is not amiss," said the

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Ball; "but yet I cannot say yes; for I am as good as promised, and to such a dear little Swallow: as often as I fly up in the air, he puts his head out of his nest and says, 'Will you?' In my heart I have said Yes, and that is as good as being half promised. But this I assure you, forget you is what I shall never do."

"That will do me much good," said the Top; and henceforth they did not speak to each other.

The following day the ball was taken out, and the Top saw how it flew high up in the air like a bird; at last one could not see it any more: every time it came back again, but always made a bound when it touched the earth, and that was occasioned either by love, or by the cork which it had in its body. The ninth time it stayed away, and did not come again: the boy searched and searched, but it was gone.

"I know very well where she is," sighed the Top; "she is in the Swallow's nest, celebrating her wedding."

The more the Top thought about it, the

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lovelier seemed the Ball to him: that he could not have her, made his love but the hotter; that another should be preferred—it was that which he could not forget! And the Top danced and hummed, but he was always thinking of the dear Ball, that seemed to him lovelier and lovelier the more he thought of her. Thus passed many years; and so then it was an old love.

The Top was no longer young; but one day, all of a sudden, he was entirely gilded over; never had he looked so beautiful, he was now a golden Top, and spun about, humming all the time, till the whole place quite rattled. Yes, that was a sight! But all at once he jumped too high, and—he was gone! They searched and searched, even in the cellar: he was no where to be found.—

Where was he?

He had sprung into a butt, full of all sorts of rubbish, cabbage-stalks, dust and parings, and of what fell from the gutter under the roof.

"A nice place this! I shall soon lose all

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my fine gilding here! and what beggarly company have I fallen among!" And saying this, he looked askance at a long cabbage-stalk that lay shockingly near, and at a strange-looking round thing, almost like an apple: but it was no apple—it was an old ball that had lain many years in the gutter, and was thoroughly soaked with water.

"Well! thank heaven! at last one sees one's equals,—some one with whom I can exchange a word," said the Ball, and looked at the golden Top. "In reality I am of morocco, sewn together by maiden's hands, and have a cork in my body: though no one would imagine it from my present appearance. I was on the point of being married to a Swallow; but I fell into the gutter, and have lain here five years, and am now wet through. That's a long time for a maiden lady, I can tell you!"

But the Top gave no reply. He thought of his old love; and the more he heard, the more certain was he that it was she.

Just at this moment the housemaid came

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to clear out the butt. "Holloa! here is the gold Top!" said she.

And the Top was brought into the playroom again, and was used and admired as before. But one heard nothing more of the Ball. And the Top never spoke of his former love: that passes by, when the affianced one has lain five years in the gutter of a roof; yes, one does not recognize her when one meets her again in a dust-hole.

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The Little Mermaid.

FAR, far away, out in the open sea, the water is as blue as the most beautiful corn-flowers, and as clear as the purest crystal; but it is very deep—deeper than the longest cable can reach. Many a church-steeple would have to be piled one on the other before you could reach from the bottom of the sea to the surface; and here, in these depths, dwell the Mer-people.

Now you must not fancy that there is no-

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thing down there but white sand; far from it. Trees and plants of wondrous beauty grow there, whose stems and leaves are so pliable that they move to and fro at the slightest motion of the water, as though they were living creatures. Large and small sea-fishes glide through the branches, as the birds fly about in the air and among the trees on land with us.

At the spot where the sea is deepest lies the palace of the Ocean-King. The walls of the palace are of coral, and the high pointed windows of amber, the roof is of sea-shells cunningly joined together, that open and shut with the swell of the waves, which has a charming effect; for in every shell shining pearls are lying, one alone of which would be a costly jewel for the crown of an earthly monarch.

The Ocean-King who lived in this palace, had been a widower many years; but his old mother managed his household affairs for him. She was a clever woman, but she was very proud of her lineage, and on that account she wore twelve oysters on her tail,

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while other Mermaids, even those of distinction, could only have six. In everything besides she merited unreserved praise, particularly on account of the great affection she bore her grand-daughters, the little Ocean-Princesses. They were six particularly beautiful children; the youngest Princess, however, was the loveliest of all the sisters. Her complexion was as fine and delicate as a rose-leaf, her eyes as blue as the deepest sea; but, like all Mermaids, she had no feet; her body ending in a tail like that of a fish.

The whole day long the children were allowed to play in the spacious halls of the palace, where beautiful flowers grew out of the walls on all sides around them. When the large amber windows were opened, great fishes swam into these apartments; just as the swallows fly into our rooms, when we leave the doors open. But the fishes were bolder than our swallows are; they swam right up to the little Princesses, ate out of their hands, followed them about

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the halls, and allowed themselves to be caressed.

In front of the palace was a large garden with crimson and dark-blue trees, whose fruits sparkled with gold; but the flowers of the garden were like a burning sun. The mould there was of the finest sand, but of a violet color, something like the flame of brimstone, and over the whole was spread a wondrous blue, so that one might have fancied oneself high up in the air, with the heavens above and below, instead of being at the very bottom of the sea. When the water was tranquil, one could see the sun, which looked then like a purple flower, out of whose chalice the light of the world was streaming.

Each of the little Princesses had her own flower-bed in the garden, in which she could plant and sow as she liked. One laid hers out in the form of a whale, another liked that of a mermaid better; but the youngest made hers quite round, like the sun, and planted in it only flowers that were red, to resemble it in color too. She was indeed an

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extraordinary child, very quiet and thoughtful. While her sisters were adorning themselves with all sorts of things as ornaments, which they had got from a ship that had been wrecked, she asked for the beautiful white boy only, a marble figure which had been found in the vessel. She placed the statue in her garden, and planted a red weeping willow beside it, which grew right pleasantly; and its long branches hung down to the blue ground, on which the flitting shadows played in violet tints, as though the roots and the tops of the boughs played with and kissed each other.

Nothing delighted the little Princess so much as to hear of the world inhabited by man, that was up above the waters. Her old grandmother was obliged to tell all that she knew about ships and towns, men and land-animals; and she was particularly delighted to hear that the flowers on the earth had a sweet odor, which is not the case with the flowers of the ocean; to learn that the woods there were green, and that the fishes that fluttered about in their branches

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were beautiful, and sing aloud. It was the birds she meant; her grandmother called them fishes, because her grand-daughters, who had never seen a bird, would otherwise not have understood her.

"When you have reached your fifteenth year," continued the old lady, "you may rise up to the surface of the sea, sit on the rocks in the moonlight, and see the large ships sail by, and become acquainted with men and cities."

The following year the eldest sister attained this happy age; but as to her sisters, unfortunately one was always a year younger than the other, and the youngest therefore had to wait five whole years before the glad moment should come for her to rise to the surface of the ocean, and behold how the upper world did look. But each promised the other to tell what she had seen, and what she thought most beautiful, as soon as the first day of her coming of age should arrive; for really their grandmother told them so very little, and there were so many things that they wanted to

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know about; besides what she did tell them, only excited their curiosity to see the wonders with their own eyes.

But none of the sisters felt so lively a longing for this day of liberation from childish restraint as the youngest; she who must wait longest, and who always moved about so quietly and absorbed in thought. Many a night did she stand at the open window, and look upwards through the clear blue water, whilst the fishes were splashing and playing around her. She could see the sun and the moon, of course in dimmed brightness only; but to her the orbs seemed larger than they do to the dwellers upon earth. If a shadow concealed them, then she knew that it was either a whale or a passing ship with human beings upon it, who certainly little thought that, far below them, a little ocean-maiden stretched her white hands upwards towards the keel of their ship, with an ardent longing to be with them.

The day had now arrived when the eldest Princess had reached her fifteenth

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year, and was therefore allowed to rise to the surface of the sea.

At her return she had a thousand things to relate; but yet her greatest enjoyment had been to sit on a sand-bank in the moonlight, and to see the large city lying on the coast, where lights like stars were shining, music sounding, and where the noise and hum of carriages and men might be heard afar. Then, too, to behold the high church-towers, and to hear the chime of the bells,—it was for these very things she felt the greatest longing, just because they were beyond her reach.

How attentively did her youngest sister listen to these words! And when she next stood by night at her open window, and looked upwards through the blue flood, she thought so intensely of the great noisy city, that she fancied she could hear the sound of the church-bells.

The following year the next sister was allowed to rise to the surface, and swim whither she pleased. She rose to the top of the water just as the sun was going down;

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and this sight so delighted her, that she said, of all she had seen above the sea, this was the most magnificent.

"The whole heaven was like gold," said she, "and the beauty of the clouds it is out of my power to describe: now red, now violet, on they sailed above me; but still more swiftly than they, a flock of white swans flew over the water at the very spot where the sun was descending. I looked after them, but the sun disappeared, and the rosy light gradually died away on the surface of the ocean, and on the edges of the clouds."

It was now the third sister's turn to rise and visit the upper world. She was the most beautiful and the boldest of the three, and therefore she swam up a river that fell into the sea. Here she saw on the banks green hills with grape-vines, castles and houses that rose up from among the woods; she heard the host of birds singing; and the sun shone so warm, that she was often obliged to dive beneath the water to cool her burning face. In a small bay she found

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a whole company of little children—the children of mortals who dwell upon the earth—who were bathing, and who jumped about naked and splashed in the water. She wished to join in their sport; but the children fled frightened to the land, and a little black animal barked so dreadfully at her, that at last she grew afraid, and swam back again to the sea. But she could not forget the sight of the green woods, the leafy hills, and of the nice little children who swam about in the water although they had no fins.

The fourth sister was not so bold; she remained in the open sea, and when she came back to her ocean-palace, related that there it was more beautiful than any where else, for one could see miles around one, while the sky, like a large bell, hung over the waves. She had seen ships too, but only so far off that they seemed to be sea-gulls; while sprightly dolphins sported on the water, and whales spouted high jets into the air that looked like a thousand fountains.

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The following year the fifth sister was fifteen. Her birthday happened at a different season—it was in winter; and so she saw what the others had not seen when she went up for the first time. The sea had become green, and icebergs were swimming about its surface. These looked like pearls, she said, but were higher than the church-towers on the land. She had seated herself on one of these swimming ice-pearls, and let the wind play with her long hair; but every ship had quickly hoisted its sails, and had hastened frightened away. The same evening the sky was covered with clouds, and while the huge blocks of ice sank and rose again out of the sea, and shone in the red glare, flashes of lightning, burst forth from the clouds, and the thunder rolled on peal after peal. Then on every ship the sails were furled, and fear and terror reigned on board. But the Princess remained quietly seated on her icy rock, and watched unconcernedly the blue zig-zag of the lightning flashing in vivid light through the clouds rushing into the sea.

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The first time that each of these sisters rose from the sea, she was astonished and enchanted at the sight of the many new and beautiful objects which she had seen in the upper world. But when now, as grown-up maidens, they had permission to go up as often as they liked, it soon lost the charm of novelty, and it was not long before their own home seemed much more delightful than the upper world; for here all seemed congenial.

Many an evening did the five sisters, arm-in-arm, rise to the surface of the sea. Their voices were much sweeter than that of any mortal; and when a storm was approaching they swam before the ships and sang, oh, so beautifully! of the joy it was to dwell at the bottom of the ocean, and begged the mariners not to be afraid, but to come down to them.

The sailors, however, did not understand their words; they took the song for the whistling of the blast, and so lost the sight of the beauties of the deep; for when a ship went down, the men on board were drown-

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ed, and arrived dead at the palace of the Ocean-King.

When the sisters thus swam in the evening hours on the tops of the waves, the youngest remained quite alone in her father's palace, looking after them; and at such times she felt as though she should weep. But the Mermaids have no tears, and therefore suffer immeasurably more in their sorrow than men, for sorrow melts men with tears.

"Oh, were I but fifteen years old!" sighed she. "I know, for certain, that I should love the upper world, and the men that live upon it, very dearly!"

At length the much-desired fifteenth year was attained!

"Now, then, it is your turn, and we are quit of you," said the old grandmother. "Come here, that I may dress you like your sisters."

So saying, she placed a royal wreath of white lilies in her hair, whose every petal was the half of a pearl, and the old lady ordered eight large oysters to hang

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themselves to the tail of the Princess, as a sign of her high descent.

"But that hurts me so!" said the little Princess.

"Little discomforts are not to be minded, if we wish to look well," answered the grandmother.

She would so gladly have cast aside all her finery, and taken off the heavy wreath, for her red flowers out of the little garden became her much better; but she dared not do so before the old lady.

"Adieu," said she, and rose out of the sea as light and as beautiful as an air-bubble in the water.

The sun had just left the horizon as she, for the first time in her life, appeared on the surface of the ocean; but the clouds still shone golden and rose-colored, the evening star gleamed in the pale red sky, the air was mild and refreshing, and the sea as smooth as a mirror.

A large ship with three masts lay on the tranquil waters; a single sail was hoisted, for not a breath of air was perceptible, and

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the sailors were sitting on the yards or in the rigging. Music and song sounded from on board; and when it was dark, hundreds of lamps suddenly glittered on the ship, and it looked as if the flags of every nation were fluttering in the air.

The little Mermaid swam to the cabin-windows, where, each time the waves lifted her on high, she was able to see through the clear glass panes. Here she saw many gaily-dressed persons; but the handsomest of all was the young Prince with the large dark eyes. He was certainly not more than sixteen. It was his birth-day that was being kept, on which account were all these festivities. The seamen danced on the deck; and when the young Prince appeared among them, hundreds of rockets were sent up into the air, turning the night into bright day, and frightening the little Mermaid so much that she plunged beneath the water for a minute or two. But she soon peeped out of the water again, and it now seemed as if all the stars of heaven were falling around her. Such a rain of fire had she

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never seen: of such arts, known but to men, she had never even dreamed. Large suns turned round, glowing fishes swam in the air, and the whole spectacle was reflected in the clear surface of the sea. On the ship itself it was so light, that one could distinguish the smallest object, and see all the persons distinctly—oh, how handsome the young Prince was! To many of the people he gave his hand, and joked and laughed; while the music sounded pleasantly in the silence of the night.

It was already late; however, the little Princess could not tear herself away from the sight of the ship and the handsome Prince. She remained looking through the cabin window, rocked to and fro by the waves. But there was a hissing or roaring in the depths of the ocean, while the Princess still swam on the surface in order to see the Prince. The ship began to move more quickly, the sails were hoisted, the waves tossed, black cloulds gathered over the sky, and the noise of distant thunder was heard. The sailors perceived that a

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storm was coming on, so they again furled the sails. Already the huge vessel rocked on the heaving sea like a mere skiff, and the waves, towering on high like black mountains, broke over it: but the good ship glided downwards in the hollow of the sea like a swan, and appeared again immediately riding on the crest of the waves now lashed into foam.

To the little Mermaid this appeared very amusing: but not so to the sailors on board. The vessel creaked and groaned, and her thick ribs bent under the heavy blows of the waves against her side, while the water rushed in. For a moment the ship reeled; the mainmast snapped as though it had been a reed: she capsized and filled. Now the little Mermaid comprehended that the people on board were in danger; for she herself was obliged to take care of the spars and timbers that had been torn away from the ship, and were now floating about in all directions on the waves.

But at this moment it became so dark that she could not distinguish anything:

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though when the dreadful lightning played, it was so light that she recognized everybody on the wreck. Her eyes sought the young Prince just at the moment when the ship went to pieces and sank. At first she felt so glad, thinking that the Prince would now come to her; but she immediately recollected that men cannot live in the water, and that therefore the Prince would only reach her palace as a corpse. Die? no, that he should not! So she swam through the pieces of wreck that the waves were driving about in all directions, forgetful of her own danger, dived and rose again, till at last she reached the spot where the Prince, almost exhausted, but just kept himself with difficulty above water. His eyes were already closing, and he would inevitably have been drowned if the little Mermaid had not come to his rescue. But she seized hold of him, and, while she was driving along by the waves, bore him above the water

Towards morning the storm abated: but not a trace of the ship was to be seen. The

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sun rose as red as fire from the sea. Its first rays seemed to color the Prince's cheeks, but his eyes were still shut. The young Mermaid kissed his high forehead, and put back his wet hair from his face. While in this state he resembled the marble figure down in her garden: she kissed him once more, and wished most fervently that he might revive, and that his eyes might open and look once upon her.

Now she beheld the firm land with its high mountains, on which the white snow was shining. A green wood stretched along the coast, and fronting it lay a chapel or a cloister; she could not well distinguish which. Citrons and oranges displayed themselves in the garden, and toward the gates was an avenue of tall palm-trees. The sea formed here a small bay, in which the water was quite still, but very deep; and only under the rocks on the shore the fine sand that had been washed up formed a firm ground. Hither the Mermaid swam with the seemingly dead Prince, laid him on the warm sand, and took care to place

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his head the higher, and to turn his face towards the sun, that its warmth might call back his life.

In the large white building that stood before her, the bells began to sound, and many young maidens came out to walk in the garden. The little Princess withdrew from the shore, hid herself behind some pieces of rock, covered her head and hair with the froth of the sea in order that her face might not be seen, and watched carefully to see who would approach the Prince.

It was not long before one of the young girls went towards him. She seemed quite terrified at the sight of the lifeless Prince; but, soon recovering herself, she ran back to call her sisters. The little Mermaid saw too that the Prince revived, and smiled kindly and joyfully on all who surrounded him; but on her he cast no look, for he did not know that it was to her he owed his preservation. And when the Prince was taken from the ground where she had laid him, and carried into the large building, she grew so sad, that she immediately plunged

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beneath the water and returned sorrowful to her father's palace.

If she had been formerly thoughtful and quiet, she was henceforward still more so. Her sisters asked her what she had seen in the world above, on the first day of her majority; but she gave no answer.

She often rose of an evening near the shore where she had left the prince; she saw how the fruits of the garden ripened and were gathered; she saw how the snow on the high mountains vanished; but the Prince she could never see; and she always, therefore, returned to her submarine dwelling melancholy and sad.

Here it was her only consolation to sit in the little garden, and to embrace the little statue that resembled the handsome Prince; but she tended her flowers no longer; they grew up wild, covered the paths, and twined their long stalks and leaves in such rank luxuriance round the branches of the trees, that the whole garden was turned into a gloomy bower.

At last being no longer able to conceal her

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sorrow, she disclosed her secret to one of her sisters. The other sisters now learned the secret immediately; but only they and some few of their friends. Among the latter was one who recollected the Prince; she, too, had been a witness of the festivities on board; she knew also in what country he was to be found, and the name of his sovereign.

"Come, little sister!" said the other Princesses, and, twining their arms together, they rose in a line out of the sea just in front of the castle of the Prince.

This castle was built of pale yellow shining stones, and furnished with a flight of steps of white marble, the last of which reached to the very margin of the sea. Over the roof was spread a magnificent gilded dome, and between the columns which surrounded the castle stood white marble figures resembling living men. Through the clear glass of the high windows one could see into the splendid halls, where the silken curtains were looped up in festoons, and all the walls decorated with the finest

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pictures; so that the sight of this gorgeous dwelling was a real delight for the little Mermaid. In the middle of one of the halls of state a jet of water made a splashing noise, sending up its stream to the glass cupola above; and through it the sun shone on the water, and on the sweet plants and flowers which grew around it.

Now, then, the little Princess knew where her dear Prince lived; and from this hour she showed herself nearly every evening, and many a night on the water. She often approached the land nearer than her sisters had ventured to do; she even swam up the whole length of the narrow canal that led below the marble balcony, whose long shadow was reflected in the water. Here, then, she tarried to gaze at the young Prince, who imagined himself alone in the clear moonlight.

She often saw him, too, on the waters in his splendid barge, over which the many gay flags were flying. She listened from among the green rushes which grew on the banks, to hear his voice; and if by chance

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a light breeze caught her silver veil, and the fluttering was observed by those in the Prince's boat, they thought it was only a swan stretching out its long white wings over the water.

Many a night when the fishermen were at their occupation by torchlight, she heard them relating much good of the Prince, and the noble actions he had performed. Then she rejoiced greatly at having saved his life, when, half-dead, he was struggling with the waves; and she remembered how his head had rested on her shoulder, and how she had kissed him when he knew nothing of it, nor even dreamed of such a thing.

Dearer and dearer did the human race become to her, and more and more did she wish to belong to them. Their world seemed to her much larger than that of the dwellers in the sea; for they could fly away in their ships over the ocean, climb to the summits of the highest mountains, that reached the clouds of heaven; and their countries, bordered by woods and decked with plea-

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sant fields, extended themselves much farther than the eye of a Mermaid could reach.

There were so many things about which she would have gladly asked for information; but her sisters could give her no satisfactory answers. So she was obliged to have recourse to the old Queen-mother, who was well acquainted with the upper-world, which she used to call "the country above the sea."

"Does the human race live for ever if the people are not drowned?" asked she once of her grandmother. "Do they never die, as we do who live at the bottom of the sea?"

"Yes," replied the old lady, "they must die as well as we; and besides, their lifetime is much shorter than ours. We can live to be three hundred years of age; but then when we die we become but foam on the sea, and have not even a grave here below among those we love. We have no immortal soul, we do not live again, but are like reeds that, once cut, can never more grow green. But men, on the contrary, have a

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soul that still lives on when their bodies are turned to earth, and which soars upward to the shining stars in heaven. As we rise out of the water to see the countries of men, so do they rise to unknown fair abodes in the skies, which our eyes are not permitted to behold."

"Why do we not have immortal souls?" asked the little Mermaid. "I would give all my three hundred years to be a human creature only for a day, and then to be allowed to dwell forever in the heavenly world."

"You must not think of such a thing," answered her old grandmother. "Why, we are much better off than men, and are far happier."

"Then I must die, and be drifted about like foam upon the waves! I shall no longer hear the sweet murmur of the sea, nor behold the beautiful flowers, nor the red sun! —And is there nothing I can do, grandmother, by which I may obtain an immortal soul?"

"No," answered she. "When only a

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mortal loveth thee so much that thou art more to him than father and mother; when every thought and all his love is concentrated in thee, and he gives his hand to the priest to be laid in thine with the promise of everlasting constancy,—then only canst thou become immortal; for then would his soul dissolve in thine, and thou wouldst be made a partaker of human happiness. But that can never happen! What in our eyes is the handsomest part of our bodies, the fish's tail is considered frightful by the inhabitants of earth, because, forsooth, they know no better. According to their notions, one must have two awkward props to one's body, 'legs,' as they call them, in order to look well!"

Then the little Mermaid sighed, and looked sorrowfully at the scaly part of her otherwise beautiful body.

"Let us be happy!" continued the old lady, "We have three hundred years to skip and swim about, and that is, after all, a pretty good time for enjoyment; when it is over, I do not doubt but that our sleep will

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be a quiet one. To-night there is a ball at court."

And a splendor was there, such as one never sees on earth. The walls of the spacious ball-room were of the thickest, yet clearest crystal; many hundred colossal grass-green and rose-colored shells stood in rows at the sides; and in these blue flames were burning, that not only illumined the whole hall, but, shining through the crystal walls, lighted up the sea far around. From the hall, therefore, could be seen more brilliant than ever, innumerable large and small fishes of the ocean, some with scales of gold and silver, and some quite red and purple.

Through the middle of the large ball-room flowed a clear broad stream, and on it danced the Mermen and the Mermaids to the melody of their own sweet voices, voices far sweeter than those of the dwellers upon earth. The little Princess sang most beautifully of all; and the others applauded and clapped their hands. This pleased her very much, although she well knew that neither in the sea nor on the land was to be found a

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being who possessed a more charming voice than hers.

But soon all her thoughts were occupied with the world above her: she could not forget the handsome Prince, and her grief at not possessing an immortal soul was very great. She therefore stole away from her father's house; and while all within was merriment and joy, she sat absorbed in thought, and hidden under the thick foliage in her little neglected garden.

On a sudden she heard the sound of horns, echoing from above through the water, far away in the distance; and she thought, "He is about to depart for the chase,—he whom I love more than my father and mother, who occupies my thoughts incessantly, and in whose hand I would so gladly lay the happiness of my life! All, all, will I hazard to win him and an immortal soul! While my sisters are dancing in the palace, I will go to the Witch of the Sea, whom it is true I always dreaded, but who, after all, is perhaps the only one who can counsel and assist me."

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The little Mermaid now left the garden, and went to the roaring Maelstrom, beyond which the sorceress dwelt. She had never been that way before: no flower grew along the path, no sea-weed, and nothing but the bare, grey, sandy ground extended itself to the Maelstrom, in which the water whirled like rushing mill-wheels, and hurled all that it seized on down into the abyss. She would have to pass through the middle of this crushing whirlpool, to arrive at the territory of the Ocean-Witch; and here, again, a long part of the way led through boiling ooze, called by the sorceress her moor-ground.

Behind this waste lay her house, in a wood of a peculiar sort, and a strange abode it was. All the trees and bushes consisted of polypi, hundred-headed, and looking like serpents shooting up out of the earth. The branches were long shiny arms, with fingers of supple worms, that, from the roots to the very highest top, unceasingly stretched out in every direction. What they caught in this manner they held so tight in their

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snake-like folds, that it could never get loose again.

The little Mermaid stood quite horrified before this frightful wood; her heart palpitated with fear, and she had nearly turned back, her mission unaccomplished, when her thoughts fell on the Prince and the immortal soul, and inspired her with new strength. She therefore bound up her long flying hair, that the polypi might not seize it and drag her towards them, folded her arms crosswise over her bosom, and then, more swiftly than a fish darts through the water, she flew by the hideous polypi, who now in vain stretched out their greedy arms towards her. But she saw how each tree had seized something, and a thousand little arms held it as fast as though it were enlocked by hands of iron. Mortals who had been lost at sea, and had sunk in the abyss, grinned as white skeletons from out the arms of these polypi; rudders, chests, skeletons of land-animals, were held fast in their embrace, and even a little Mermaid was there that they had dragged into their clutches

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and strangled, which, for the poor Princess, already trembling with fear, must have been a dreadful sight.

After she had passed safely through the fearful wood, she reached a slimy place where large fat sea-snails were crawling about; and in the middle of this place stood a house built of the bones of human beings who had been lost at sea. Here sat the Witch, caressing a toad in the same manner as we often see persons feeding a canary with sugar. The disgusting fat snails she called her chickens, and allowed them to sit upon her spongy shoulders and creep about her skinny neck.

"I know well what you would ask of me," said she to the little Princess; "your intention is foolish enough, but, nevertheless, your wish shall be fulfilled, my pretty maiden, though it is sure to bring misfortune on you. You would like to get rid of your tail, and to have in its place two stilts such as men use, that the young Prince may fall in love with you, and so you may get an immortal soul."

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While the Witch of the Sea said this she laughed with all her might, and so frightfully, that the pet toad and the snails tumbled down and rolled about upon the ground.

"You come just at the right time," continued she. "If you had come to-morrow after the sun had risen, I should have been unable to help you until a year's end. I will prepare you a potion, with which you must swim to the land; you must then seat yourself on the shore, and drink it. Your fish's tail will immediately fall off, and shrivel up into the things which men call 'legs;' but this transformation is very painful, and you will feel the while as if a sharp instrument were thrust through your whole body. All who then behold you will say you are the most beautiful mortal they have ever seen; you will retain your gliding gait, and no dancer, be she ever so light, will move with so elastic a step; but at every motion you will suffer intolerable pain; you will feel as though you were treading on pointed blades and your blood flowing from

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the wounds. If you will subject yourself to all these torments, I will grant your request."

"Yes, I will!" answered the little Princess, with trembling voice; for she thought of her beloved Prince, and of the acquirement of an immortal soul.

"But remember," said the Witch, "that you can never be a mermaid again, when you have once taken upon yourself the human form; you will never be able to descend to your sisters and to your paternal dwelling; and should you not gain the Prince's love in such degree that, for your sake, he forgetteth father and mother, that all his thoughts and all his joy be centered in you, and a priest join your hands together that you become man and wife,—without this you will never obtain the immortality you seek. The morning after he is united to another will be the day of your death; your heart will then break for grief, and you will pass away and be changed into the foam on the waves of the sea."

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"I still will venture!" continued the little Mermaid, pale and trembling like one on the point of death.

"But I must be paid too, and it is no trifle that I require of you for my trouble. You have the most charming voice of all the dwellers in the sea, and on it you reckon to captivate the Prince; but this voice I must have as my recompense. The best of your possessions I demand for my miraculous potion; for I must give of my own blood to impart to the mixture the sharpness of a two-edged sword."

"But if you take my voice from me," said the Princess, "what have I left to captivate the prince?"

"Your lovely form," answered the Witch; "your light aërial step, and your expressive eyes. These are surely enough to befool a poor human heart! Well, what do you say? Have you lost courage? Come, out with your tongue, that I may cut it off and take it for myself in exchange for my magic drink."

"Be it so!" answered the Princess; and

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now the Witch set her caldron on the fire, to seethe the charmed potion. "Cleanliness is a principal thing," said she, taking a handful of toads and snails to scour her kettle with. She then scratched her bosom, and let the black blood drop into the vessel. The vapor that rose from the mixture took such horrid forms as to terrify the beholder. Every moment the Witch threw in new ingredients; and when the caldron boiled, sighs and lamentations rose from it resembling the wail of the crocodile. At last the mixture was ready, and was now become as clear and transparent as pure water as she poured it into a phial.

"There it is," said the hag to the Princess; and at the same moment she cut off her tongue. The little Mermaid was thus made dumb; she could neither speak nor sing.

"Should the polypi try to catch hold of you when you pass through my bower," observed the Witch, "you need only sprinkle a drop of this potion upon them, and their arms will break in a thousand pieces."

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But the Princess found this unnecessary; for the polypi drew back affrighted when they perceived the shining phial in her hand, that gleamed before her like a beaming star. In this way she soon passed the dreadful wood, crossed the heath of the sorceress, and glided safely through the torrent of the roaring Maelstrom.

She now looked once again at her father's palace; the lamps in the ball-room were extinguished, and all her family were doubtless gone to rest. She would not enter, as she was unable to speak, and was, besides, on the point of leaving her home for ever. At the thought her heart was well-nigh broken; she glided into the garden, picked a flower from the bed of each sister as a remembrance, waved with her hand many a farewell towards the palace, and then rose through the dark blue waters to the upper world.

The sun had not yet risen when she reached the Prince's dwelling, and ascended the well-known marble steps—the moon was in the sky. And now the little Mer-

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maid emptied the phial with the subtly-piercing draught, which convulsed her whole frame: she felt it pass through her like the thrust of a cutting sword, and it affected her so violently that she sank lifeless on the ground.

When the sun rose she awoke, and felt a burning pain in every limb; but before her stood the object of her fervent love, the handsome young Prince, who fixed his dark eyes upon her. She looked down ashamed when she saw that, in place of the long fish-like tail which she had hitherto borne, the finest legs were grown which it was possible to have. But she was naked, and she covered herself therefore with her long hair.

The Prince asked who she was, and whence she came; and, smiling sweetly, she looked at him with her bright blue eyes, for unfortunately she could speak no more. He then took her hand, and led her into his castle. At every step it was as the Witch had said,—as though she was treading on sharp-cutting blades; but she bore the pain wil-

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lingly. She moved along beside the Prince like a zephyr; and all who saw her wondered at the charming grace and lightness of every movement.

When she had entered the palace, robes of muslin and of costly silks were handed to her, and she was the most lovely among the ladies of the court; but she could speak and sing no longer. Female slaves, prettily dressed in silk and gold brocade, now appeared to sing before the Prince and his royal parents. One was particularly distinguished from the others by her beautiful clear voice; and the Prince testified his approbation by clapping his hands. This made the little Mermaid quite melancholy, for she knew she could have sung much better than these slaves, if her voice had not been taken from her.

"Oh," thought she in silence, "if he did but know that for his sake I have sacrificed my voice for ever!"

The slaves now began to dance. Then the dainty little Mermaid stretched out her delicate white arms, and danced with such

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a step and air as had never been seen before. With every movement the lovely grace of her body seemed more apparent, and the expression which beamed in her speaking eyes appealed to the heart of the spectators far more movingly than the songs of the female slaves.

All present were enchanted with her, but especially the young Prince, who called her his dear little foundling. And she danced again, and more beautifully still, although at every step she was obliged to bear the smart of cutting knives; and the Prince said she should always remain in his palace; and an apartment was prepared for her, provided with graceful furniture, and a bed of velvet cushions.

And the Prince had a riding-dress made for her, that she might accompany him on horseback; and they rode together through the fragrant woods, where the green boughs touched their shoulders, and the little birds rejoiced from behind the fresh leaves. With the Prince, too, she climbed the highest mountains; and although her delicate feet

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bled as she went, so that the attendants remarked it, she only laughed, and still followed her dear Prince up on high, where she saw the clouds chasing each other beneath them like a flock of birds passing to other lands.

At night, when all in the palace were asleep, she would descend the marble steps to cool her feet in the refreshing sea; and she thought then of her own dear ones in the deep.

Once, while standing there in the night, her sisters came swimming by, arm-in-arm, and their singing was most melancholy. She beckoned to them, and her sisters recognized her, and told her how great had been the mourning for her in their father's house.

Henceforward they visited their sister every night; and once brought with them their old grandmother, who for many years had not been in the upper world, and their father too, the Ocean-King, with the crown upon his head. But the two old persons did not venture so near the land as to be able to speak to her.

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Each day the little Mermaid grew dearer to the Prince; he loved her like a good dear child; but to make her his wife never even entered his thoughts; and yet she must become his wife, before she could obtain an immortal soul; his wife she must be, or be changed into foam and be driven restlessly and forever over the billows of the sea.

"But do you not care most for me?" her eyes seemed to say, when he pressed her fondly in his arms and kissed her beautiful forehead.

"Yes," then said the Prince, "you are dearer to me than all beside; for in goodness there is none like you. You are devoted to me; and, moreover, you resemble a maid that I once saw standing before me, but shall probably never behold again. I was on board a ship that was wrecked in a sudden storm; the waves threw me on the shore near a sacred temple, in which many virgins were performing the offices of their religion. The youngest of them found me on the shore, and saved my life. I saw her but once; yet her image is vivid before my

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eyes,—she is the only one I can ever love. But you are so like her!—yes, you almost drive her remembrance from my soul! But she belongs to the holy temple, and my good fortune has therefore given me you as a consolation. Never, never will we be parted!"

"Oh, he does not know that it was I who saved his life!" thought the little Mermaid, with a sigh. "I bore him over the wild flood to the grove where the temple stands; I sat behind the rocks, and listened if mortals came; it was I who saw the beauteous maiden come whom he loves more than me." And she sighed deeply at these words; for she could not weep.—"She belongs to the holy temple, he says; she never goes into the world; she will therefore never meet him again. But I am near him; I see him daily; I will tend him, and love him, and to him will I devote my whole life."

"The Prince will soon wed the daughter of the King our neighbor," said the people; "and that's the reason why the stately ship

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is being got ready. 'Tis true, they say he is going to travel through the country; but the real reason is to see the Princess. That is the cause of his taking such a large retinue with him." But the little Mermaid laughed at these conjectures; for she knew the Prince's intentions better than any one else.

"I must make a journey," said he to her; "I must go and see the beautiful Princess. My parents require me to do so; but force me to marry her—to bring her back as my betrothed—that they will never do. Besides, it is impossible for me to love the Princess; for she cannot be as like the lovely maiden of the temple as you are; and if I am to choose, I would rather take thee, my little silent foundling, with the speaking eyes!" And he kissed her, and hid her head on his heart; and then she dreamed a sweet vision of mortal happiness and of an immortal soul.

"You do not fear the water, my dumb child?" asked he tenderly, as she stood on the splendid ship that was to convey him to

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the territories of the neighboring monarch. And then he told her of storms at sea, and of calms, of rare fish that inhabited the deep, and what divers had seen below. But she smiled at his words: for she knew better than any mortal creature how it looked, and what went on, in the depths of the ocean.

In the moonlight night, when all on board slept except the man at the helm, she sat at the bow and looked over the ship's side into the sea. It seemed to her as though she could see her father's palace, and her old grandmother with her silver crown, as she gazed down into the parted waters.

And then her sisters appeared upon the waves, looked at her fixedly and with sorrowful expression, and stretched out their arms towards her. She beckoned to them, smiled, and would have told them by signs that she was happy; but just at that moment the cabin-boy approached, and the sisters dived down so suddenly that the boy thought the white appearance he saw upon

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the surface of the water was only the foam of the sea.

The next morning the ship entered the harbor of the splendid capital of the neighboring king. The bells rang a merry peal, and the clarions sounded from the high towers, while the soldiers in the streets paraded with waving colors and glittering arms.

Each day brought with it some new festival. But the Princess had not yet arrived in the town: she had been educated in a convent far off, where she had been taught the exercise of all royal virtues. At last she came.

The little Mermaid was curious to see her beauty; and she was forced to acknowledge that she had never on earth beheld more noble features. The skin of the Princess was so fair and delicate that her veins were seen through it; and from behind her dark lashes smiled a pair of deep-brown eyes.

"It is herself!" exclaimed the Prince, on beholding her, "Thou art she who saved

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my life when I lay senseless on the shore!" and he pressed his blushing affianced bride to his beating heart. "Oh, now I am more than happy!" said he to his little dumb foundling. "That which I never hoped to see fulfilled has happened. Thou wilt rejoice at my happiness; for thou lovest me more than all who surround me."

Then the little Mermaid kissed his hand in her dumb sorrow, and she thought her heart would break; for the dawn of his marriage-day was to bring her unavoidable death.

And again the church-bells rang, and heralds rode through the streets of the capital and announced the approaching wedding of the Princess. Odorous flames burnt out of silver vases on every altar; the priests swung the censers, and bride and bridegroom gave each other the hand while the clergyman blessed the holy union. The little Mermaid, clad in silk and cloth of gold, stood behind the Princess and held the train of her bridal dress; but her ear heard not the solemn music, her eye saw nothing of

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the holy ceremony; she thought of her own death which that night was to bring, and of her irrevocable loss of this world, and the next.

On the same evening the bride and bridegroom went on board of the ship; the cannons thundered, flags waved, and in the centre of the deck stood a magnificent pavilion of gold cloth and purple, furnished with the most costly cushions for the princely pair. The sails swelled with a favorable wind, and the vessel glided lightly over the surface of the blue sea.

When it grew dusk, colored lamps were hung up, and the ship's crew began dancing on deck. The little Mermaid was unconsciously reminded of the sight the ship presented at her first appearance in the upper world, before the wreck took place. A like magnificence was then displayed; and now she must skim along in the dance like a swallow that is pursued. All shouted applause; for never had she been seen to dance so enchantingly. It is true, her delicate feet suffered indescribably all the while;

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but she was now insensible to that, the suffering her heart endured overcame all other pain.

It was the last evening she was to see him for whom she had left her home and all who were dear to her; for whom she had given up her charming voice, and daily endured the most violent pains, without his having even the slightest suspicion of the matter.

It was the last night that she would breathe the same air in which he, the dearly loved one, lived; the last night in which she would enjoy the sight of the deep sea and of the starry sky; for an eternal night, without sense or dreaming, awaited her. And all was joy on board till long past midnight; and even she laughed like the rest, with the thoughts of death and everlasting annihilation in her bleeding heart. The Prince kissed his lovely bride, and arm-in-arm they went to rest in the beautiful tent.

Now all was still and quiet on the ship; the helmsman only continued standing at

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the rudder. The little Mermaid laid her white arms upon the gallery, and looked towards the east for the coming dawn: the first sunbeam would be her death—that she knew.

Then she saw her sisters rise from out the sea; their faces were deadly pale, and their long hair they once had, was no longer fluttering on their necks, for it had all been cut off.

"We have given it to the Witch," said they, "that she might lend her aid, and that thou mightest not perish this night. She has given us a knife; here it is; feel how sharp it is! Before the sunrise thou must plunge it in the heart of the Prince; and when his warm blood drops upon thy feet, they will again grow together and become the tail of a fish; thou wilt be again a Mermaid, and wilt live full three hundred years before thou art as the froth of the sea. Quick, then! for he must die, or thou, before the sun appear! Our old grandmother mourns so sadly for thee, that her silver hair has fallen off through sorrow, as ours

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under the scissors of the Witch. Kill the Prince, and come to us! Haste—haste! dost thou not see a red streak in the sky, announcing the near approach of the sun? But a few moments, and he will rise, and thou art lost for ever!" At these words, heaving a deep and painful sigh, they plunged down and disappeared beneath the water.

The little Mermaid drew aside the purple curtains of the pavilion, and saw the lovely bride reposing on the bosom of the Prince; and she bent over both, kissed his forehead, looked up at the sky, and saw that the flush of the opening day grew brighter and brighter.

In his dream the Prince pronounced the name of his bride—she only lived in his thoughts; and the fatal knife quivered in the Mermaid's hand. But suddenly she hurled the murderous instrument far into the sea; the waves where it fell blazed up in a bright flame, and it seemed as if the water was dyed with blood. Once more she gazed with glassy eye on the beloved Prince, then

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flung herself from the ship into the sea; and she felt her body gradually dissolving into foam.

The sun now rose out of the sea; his rays fell warm and genial on the cold yeast of the waves, so that the little Mermaid did not feel death; she still saw the beautiful sun, and above her floated a thousand lovely transparent forms. She could see the white sails of the ship and the red clouds in the sky; and the voices of those aërial shapes were such sublime and spiritual melody, that a human ear was as incapable of perceiving it as the eye was unable to behold the varied imageries. They hovered around her floating through the air without wings, borne by their own buoyancy. The little Mermaid now saw that she too had a body resembling these ethereal forms, and felt that she was gradually raised upwards to higher regions from out of the froth of the ocean.

"Whither are they bringing me?" asked she; and her words sounded like the voices

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of heavenly beings, which no earthly music can ever imitate.

"To the daughters of air!" sounded in answer. "The Mermaid has not an immortal soul, and can only obtain that heavenly gift by winning the love of a son of man. Her eternal life depends on her union with him. Neither do the daughters of air possess an immortal soul; but they may win it by good deeds. We fly to burning lands, where the sultry air of the plague kills the children of men, and waft them fresh cooling breath. We spread the fragrance of the flowers through the air, and thus distribute new life and health over the earth. When in this manner we have for three hundred years done all the good that lay in our power, we obtain eternal life, and share the immortal bliss of man. Poor little Mermaid! Thou, by the impulse of thy own heart, hast done the like; thou hast borne and suffered; and now, raised to the world of aërial spirits, thou mayest by good deeds earn an immortal soul at the end of three hundred years."

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And the little Mermaid stretched her transparent arms upwards to the sun, and, for the first time in her life tears wetted her eyes.

And now again on the ship all were awake and rejoicing; she saw the Prince and his lovely bride, and watched how both sought after her. Sorrowfully they looked at the froth of the sea, as if they knew that she had plunged into the waves. Unseen she kissed the bridegroom's forehead, smiled at him, and then rose with the other children of air, and soared high above the rosy clouds that floated so peacefully over the ship.

"So, after three hundred years, shall we be soaring in the kingdom of God!"

"But we may get there sooner!" whispered one of the sisters in her ear. "Unseen, we fly into the abodes of men where children are, and for each day in which we find a good child that is a joy to its parents and deserves their love, does God in his great mercy shorten the time of our probation. No child knoweth when we pass

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through his chamber; but our joy at the sight calls forth a smile, and one year is taken from the three hundred that we have to wait. But if we see a naughty or wicked child, we shed tears of sorrow, and every tear we shed prolongs the time of our probation by a day."

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The Storks.

N the roof of a house situated at the extremities of a small town a Stork's nest had been built. The Mamma Stork sat in the nest with her four little ones, who stretched out their heads with their little black beaks; for as yet they had not grown red. Not far off, on the ridge of the roof, stood stiff and proud, the Papa Stork; one leg he had drawn up under his body, so that one might suppose he was really a

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little tired with standing sentry. You would have thought he was carved out of wood, so still did he stand.

"It looks very consequential for my wife to have a sentry before the nest," thought he to himself; "for the people, of course, don't know that I am her husband,—they think, no doubt, that I have been ordered here as sentinel. And it looks so very grand!" And so he continued standing on one leg.

In the street below a whole troop of children were playing; and when they observed the Storks, one of the wildest of the boys began to sing the old song about young Storks which the children in Denmark sing, and all the rest immediately joined in chorus; but they did not repeat the words very correctly, and only just as they could remember them:

"Stork, Stork, long-legs,
What are you about?
Fly home to your eggs,
Your wife is in her nest here,
Your young are peeping out.

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One we'll hang,
Then burn his brother;
We'll stick the third upon a spear,
And then we'll shoot the other!"

"Only hear what the boys are singing!" said the little Storks; "they say we are to be burned and hanged!"

"Don't care about what they say," said the Mamma Stork. "You need not to listen to them, and then they will do you no harm."

But the boys kept on singing, and pointing at the Storks; one boy only, whose name was Peter, said it was wicked to make fun of animals, and would have nothing to do with the matter.

The mamma consoled her little ones, and said "Don't care about it; only look how quietly your father stands; and that, too, upon one leg!"

"But we are so frightened!" said the young Storks; and they drew their heads as far into the nest as they could.

The next day, when the children met

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again at play, they began the old song, as soon as they saw the Storks:

> "One we'll hang,
> And we'll burn his brother!"

"Shall we really be burned and hanged?" asked the little ones.

"What nonsense!" said the mother. "You shall learn to fly, and I will drill you. Then we'll go into the meadows, and pay the frogs a visit. They bow to us in the water, and sing 'croak, croak;' and then we eat them. Oh, it will be so amusing!"

"And what then?" asked the little ones.

"Why, then all the Storks of the whole neighborhood assemble, and the autumn manœuvres begin. One must be able to fly well then; for if one cannot, then comes the General and strikes it dead with his beak. So pay attention when the drill begins, in order that you may learn something."

"Oh, then, we shall really be murdered, as the boys said! Oh, do hear!—now they are singing it again!"

"Listen to me, and not to them," said

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the Mamma Stork. "After the great manœuvre, we fly away to the warmer countries; far, far from here, over the woods and the hills. We shall fly to Egypt, where the three-cornered stone houses are, whose tops reach the clouds. They are called Pyramids, and are older than any Stork can think. A river is there that overflows its banks, so that the whole country is like a morass. Then one goes into the mud and eats frogs."

"Oh!" said all the little ones.

"Yes, that is so delightful! The whole day one does nothing but eat; and while we lead such a nice life, here in this country there is not a single green leaf on the trees. It is so cold here, that the clouds freeze, and crack, and fall down in little white rags."

It was the snow she meant; but she could not express herself more plainly.

"Do the little naughty boys freeze and crack into bits too?" asked the young Storks.

"No, they do not crack into bits quite, but very nearly; and they are obliged to

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stay in the dark rooms, and sit in the chimney-corner. You, on the other hand, all that time can fly about in a foreign land, where there is warm sunshine, and where there are flowers."

Some time had now passed, and the young ones were so large that they could stand up in the nest and look around. And Papa Stork came every day with the very nicest little frogs, with snails, and all the titbits that Storks like, which he could find. Oh, it was extraordinary, what delicious morsels he got for them, and it was so droll to see him showing off his tricks. He put his head back quite on his tail, and made a noise with his bill like a rattle; and then he told some pretty stories; all stories about the marshes.

"Hark ye! you must now learn to fly!" said the Mamma Stork one day. On which all the four little ones were obliged to get out of the nest on the ridge of the roof. How they tottered! how they balanced themselves with their wings! and yet they very nearly tumbled down.

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"Only look at me!" said their mother. "You must hold your head so! And put out your leg so! And thus must you set your wings! Now, then! One, two! One, two! That is what will help you on in the world!" And then off she flew a little way; and the young Storks made a little awkward jump, when—plump!—there they lay; for their bodies were so heavy.

"I don't want to fly, I cannot, it's no use trying," said one, and crept back again into the nest. "I do not care about seeing the warm countries."

"Will you, then, stay here and freeze to death when winter comes? Shall the boys come and hang, and burn, and shoot you: just wait a minute till I go and call them!"

"Oh, don't!" said the little Stork, and began again to hop about the roof like the others.

On the third day they really were able to fly a little; and then they thought they could sit and rest in the air; but—plump!—down they went, and were obliged to make use of their wings. Just then the boys

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went down the street, and sang the old song:

"Stork, Stork, long-legs!"

"Shall we fly down and pick out their eyes?" said the young ones.

"No; leave them alone," said their mother. "Listen to me, that is much more important! One, two, three! To the right about, face! One, two, three! To the left about, face! Round the chimney-pot! You see, that was very well! The last flap of your wings was so exact, and so nicely done, that I will allow you to go with me to-morrow to the marsh. Many highly-respectable Stork-families come there with their children; now let me have the satisfaction of hearing that mine are the nicest and best behaved of all; and stand upright, your chest forwards! So!—that looks well, and gives a sort of dignity!"

"But are we to have no revenge at all on the wicked boys?" asked the young Storks.

"Let them sing as much as they like! Why, you fly up to the clouds, don't you?

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you go to the land of the Pyramids; while they must freeze, and have neither a sweet apple nor a green leaf."

"But we will be revenged, though!" whispered they to each other; and then the drilling began again.

Of all the boys in the street, there was not one more naughty in singing jeering songs than he who was the beginner of it all; and that was a little shrimp of a fellow not more than six years old. The young Storks thought of course that he was a hundred years old, for he was much bigger than their father or mother; and what did they know how old a child might be, or grown-up people either? All their rage was to fall on this boy, who had begun to tease them, and always kept on singing his old song. The young Storks were much excited; and the bigger they grew, the less could they put up with it; so that at last their mother was obliged to promise that they should have their revenge, but not before the last day of their stay in the land.

"We must first see, you know, how you

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go through the grand review. If you behave ill, so that the General sends his beak through your body, then the boys will be right in one sense, after all. Now let us see!"

"You shall see," said the young Storks: and now, for the first time, they really took pains; they practised every day, and flew so lightly and prettily that it was quite a pleasure to see them.

Autumn came at last, and all the Storks assembled to fly away to warmer lands while it is winter with us. That was a manœuvre! They stretched away over the fields and the woods, over towns and villages, only to see how well they could fly; for they had a long journey before them. The young Storks got on so capitally, that on their testimonials was put, not only "praiseworthy," but "snake-and-frogworthy" also. This was the best character they could have; and now they might eat snakes and frogs, and they did so too.

"Now we will have our revenge," said they.

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"Leave off talking of revenge," said the mother. Listen to me, which is a great deal better. Do you not remember the good little boy who said, when the others sung 'that it was a sin to make fun of the Storks;' "let us reward him, that is better than having revenge." "Yes, let us reward him," said the young Storks. "He shall have, next summer, a nice little sister, such a beautiful little sister as never was seen! Will not that be a reward for him?" said the mother.

"It will;" said the young ones.

"A sweet little sister he shall have!" continued the mother. "And as his name is Peter, you shall all be called Peter too."

"Yes, but what shall we do with the good-for-nothing boy who began to jeer at us?" cried all the young Storks at once.

"To him we will bring neither brother nor sister. What I have fixed on is best. I know where all the little babies lie till the Storks come and carry them to their parents. The nice little children sleep, and have such beautiful dreams as they

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never have again. Now every parent wishes to have such a little child, and all children wish for a brother or sister. We will fly to the pond, and for each of the children that did not sing the song nor laugh at the Storks, we will fetch one."

And what she said happened; the little boy had the loveliest of little sisters next year; and from that time all the Storks in Denmark were named Peter, and they are called so to this very day.

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The Nightingale.

HINA, you must know, has an Emperor who is a Chinese; and all those he has around him are Chinese people too. It is a long time ago, now, since these things happened, but just for that very reason it is worth while to hear this story, before it is forgotten.

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The Nightingale.

The Emperor's palace was the most magnificent in the whole world, made entirely of the finest porcelain; so costly, but also so fragile that one was really obliged to take care when one touched it.

In the garden the most curious flowers were to be seen, and on the most beautiful of these, little silver bells were fastened, which kept on tinkling, in order that no one might pass by without remarking the flowers. Yes, everything was so cunningly devised in the Emperor's garden, and it extended so far that the gardener himself did not know where the end was; whoever went beyond it, however, came into a most beautiful wood, with high trees and deep lakes.

The wood reached back a great way, to the very sea, which was deep and blue; great ships could sail close under the branches. And amid these boughs there dwelt a Nightingale, which sang so sweetly that even the poor fisherman, who, however, had many other things to do, stood still when he was out at night to draw his nets, and listened to the Nightingale.

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"How beautiful it is!" said he; but then he was obliged to go about his work and forget the bird; but the following night, when she sang again and the fisherman came out, he said anew, "Oh, how beautiful it is!"

From all parts of the world came travelers to the city of the Emperor, and they admired it, and with astonishment they beheld the palace, and the garden, and all the wonderful things around them; but when they heard the Nightingale, they all said, "However, this the best!"

When the travelers returned to their homes, they related what they had seen, and the learned men wrote many books about the city, and the palace, and the garden: but they did not forget the Nightingale; she was placed first; and they who could write poetry, all wrote the most charming verses about the Nightingale in the wood near the deep lake.

These books went round the world; and so at last one reached the Emperor. He sat in his golden chair, and read, and read, and

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every moment nodded his head; for he was pleased with the splendid description of the city, and the palace, and the garden. There, too, stood these words: "But the Nightingale is the best of all."

"The deuce!" said the Emperor: "the Nighingale! I know of no Nightingale! Is such a bird in my dominions, and, moreover, in my garden? I never heard of it!—and that one must first learn such a thing from books!"

"Hereupon he called his Chamberlain. He was so high a personage that no one of inferior rank dared address or speak with him; and when any one did venture to ask him any thing, he only answered "Pe!"—and that has no particular meaning.

"Why, they say there is a most curious bird here, called a Nightingale," said the Emperor; "they say her song is better than any thing else in my whole empire: what's the reason I have not been informed of it?"

"I have never heard her mentioned before," said the Chamberlain; "she has never been presented at court."

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"It is my will that she comes here and sings this very evening," said the Emperor. "The whole world knows what I have, and I do not know it myself!"

"I never heard her mentioned before," said the Chamberlain; "but I will go and look for her."

But where was the melodious bird to be found? The Chamberlain ran up one flight of stairs and down another, through halls and corridors; not a single person whom he met had heard any thing of the Nightingale; and the Chamberlain ran back again to the Emperor, and said it was certainly only a tale invented by the persons who wrote the books.

"Your imperial Majesty must not believe all that is written or printed in books!" said he. "Much in them is pure invention, and that is what is called the Black Art."

"But the book in which I read it," said the Emperor, "was sent me by the mighty Emperor of Japan, and therefore it cannot be an untruth. I will hear the Nightingale! She must come here this very evening!

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She shall enjoy my highest favor; and if she do not come, then after supper I'll have the tattoo played on the back of every courtier!"

"Tsing-pe!" said the Chamberlain; and again he ran up stairs and down stairs, through all the halls and corridors; and half the court ran with him, for they did not much like having the tattoo played upon their backs. There was such a questioning about the wonderful nightingale that the whole world knew and talked about, but which nobody at court had ever seen or heard of.

At last they met a poor little girl, employed in the kitchen, who said: "The Nightingale? oh, I know it very well! How she can sing! Every evening I am allowed to carry the remnants from the table to my poor sick mother,—she lives down yonder near the shore,—and when I come back, and stop to rest in the wood, then I hear the Nightingale sing! The tears always come into my eyes; it is just as if my own mother was kissing me!"

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"Little kitchen-maid," said the Chamberlain, "I will get you a permanent place in the kitchen, besides a permission to see his Majesty the Emperor dine, if you can conduct us to the Nightingale; for she is announced at court for this evening."

So then they all went together to the wood, where the Nightingale used to sing: half the court was with them. As they were going, a cow began to low.

"Oh," said the court-pages, "now we have her! The power is really extraordinary for so small an animal! I am certain I have heard the voice somewhere before already."

"No, that is the lowing of the cows," said the little girl; "we are still far from the place."

Then the frogs in the pond croaked.

"Admirable!" said the Chinese court-chaplain; "that is the famous singer, now I hear her; it sounds just like the ringing of church-bells, only in a smaller way!"

"No, those are frogs," said the little

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The Nightingale,—Page 111.

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kitchen maid. "But now, I think, you will soon hear her."

Just then the Nightingale began to warble one of her long sweet trills.

"That is she!" said the girl; "hark! hark! and there she sits!" And she pointed to a little grey bird which was perched high up on a bough.

"Is it possible!" said the Chamberlain. "I did not fancy she would be like that! How the simpleton looks! She has doubtless changed color at the sight of so many personages of rank."

"Little Nightingale," said the maiden quite loud, "our gracious Emperor wishes you would sing something to him."

"With the greatest pleasure!" said the Nightingale; and she sang so that it was a delight to listen.

"It sounds like glass bells," said the Chamberlain; "and look at the little throat, how it moves! It is extraordinary that we never heard her before: she will have wonderful success at court."

"Shall I sing to the Emperor again?"

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asked the Nightingale; for she thought the Emperor was present.

"My excellent Nightingale," said the Chamberlain, "I have the inexpressible pleasure to require your attendance this evening at a court-festival, where you will delight his Imperial Majesty with your charming song."

"It is heard to far greater advantage in the green wood," said the Nightingale; but she followed willingly, when she heard it was the Emperor's wish.

The palace was decked out in fine style! The walls and the floors, which were made of porcelain, glittered from many thousand golden lamps: the most beautiful flowers, with the merriest tinkling bells, were placed in the corridors: there was a bustle and a draught, and then all the bells tinkled so that one could not hear oneself speak.

In the midst of the grand saloon, where the Emperor sat, a golden perch was erected: on this the Nighingale was to sit. The whole court was there, and the little kitchen-maid had received permission to stand be-

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hind the door; for she had now actually the rank and title of "Maid of the kitchen." Every body was in full dress; and every body looked at the little grey bird, to whom the Emperor nodded, as a signal for her to begin.

And the Nightingale sang with such melting sweetness that tears came into the Emperor's eyes—tears rolled down his cheeks; and then the Nightingale sang more beautifully still; her song went to the heart of all who heard her; and the Emperor was happy; and in an ecstasy of delight, he said the Nightingale should have his golden slipper, and wear it about her neck. But the Nightingale thanked him: she was rewarded sufficiently already.

"I have seen tears in the Emperor's eyes;" said she; "that is to me the greatest treasure. The tears of an Emperor have a wonderful virtue in them. Heaven knows, in them I have reward enough!" and then she sang again with her sweet and lovely voice.

"It is the prettiest piece of coquetry ever

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known!" said the ladies around, and they took water in their mouths, to make their voices liquid, and tried to move their throats as she did: they then thought themselves Nightingales; yes, even the lackeys and ladies'-maids gave notice that they too were satisfied; and that is saying a great deal, for, of all people, they are the most difficult to please. Yes, the Nightingale was very successful.

She was now to remain at court, to have her own cage, as well as the permission to fly out twice in the day, and once in the night. Twelve servants were given her, who were to hold a silk riband tied to her leg; and pretty tight they held. There was no pleasure in such a flight.

The whole town spoke of the wonderful bird; and when two persons met, one said "Night," and the other "Gale;" and then they sighed, and understood each other perfectly: yes, the children of eleven citizens were named after her; but none of them had her tones in their throats.

One day there arrived a great parcel for

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the Emperor, and on it was written, "Nightingale."

"Here we have another new book about our celebrated bird," said the Emperor: however, it was no book, but a little piece of mechanism, which lay in a box: an artificial Nightingale, which was meant to look like the living one; but set all over with diamonds, rubies, and sapphires. As soon as the artificial bird was wound up, it could sing one of the songs which the real Nightingale sang; and its tail went up and down all the time, and glittered with silver and gold. Round its neck was a little riband, on which was written, "The Nightingale of the Emperor of China is poor in comparison with that of the Emperor of Japan."

"That's splendid!" exclaimed every one: and he who had brought the Nightingale immediately received the title of "Imperial Chief Nightingale-bearer." Now they must sing together! That will make a fine duet!

And so together they were obliged to sing; but it would not do very well, for the

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real Nightingale sang in her own way, and the artificial bird was moved by wheels. "It is not his fault," said the Chief Musician: "he keeps time wonderfully well, and is formed exactly after my school."

Then the artificial bird was to sing alone. He had just as much success as the real Nightingale; and, besides, he was so much prettier to look at; he shone like bracelets and breast-pins.

Three-and-thirty times did he sing the same piece, and yet he was not at all tired; ever body would have liked to have heard it again from the very beginning, but the Emperor thought that now the real Nightingale ought to sing something;—but where was she? No one had observed her take the opportunity, while they were all listening and looking at the new favorite to fly out of the open window, away to her own green wood.

"But what is the meaning of that?" said the Emperor; and all the courtiers scolded, and thought the Nightingale a most ungrateful animal. "Nevertheless we have the

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best bird still," said they; and for the four-and-thirtieth time they heard the same tune, but they did not know it quite, it was so difficult; and the Chief Musician praised the bird so exceedingly; yes, he even asserted it was better than the real Nightingale; not only as regarded appearance and the many diamonds, but also the inside.

"For look, your Majesty," said he, "and you, ladies and gentlemen; with the real Nightingale one never can calculate beforehand what is to come; but with the mechanical bird all is determined: it will be so, and not otherwise; one can explain it, one can take it to pieces, and show the human contrivance: how the wheels are placed, how they move, and how one follows after the other."

"Just my opinion!" cried every body; and the Chief Musician gained permission to show the bird to the people on the next holiday. "They should also hear him sing," said the Emperor; and they did hear him, and were as pleased as if they had been enjoying themselves with tea—for that is

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truly Chinese, and all said "O!" and held up their forefingers and nodded their heads. But the poor fisherman, who had heard the the real Nightingale, said, "It sounds pretty enough—it sounds nearly like; but yet there is something wanting,—I do not know what."

The real Nightingale was banished the empire. But she remained quietly in her woody retreat.

The artificial bird had his place on a silken cushion, close to the Emperor's bed; and all the presents he received, gold and precious stones, lay around him; and he had risen in rank to be "Imperial Bedchamber:" in rank NUMBER ONE, on the left hand; for the Emperor considers the side on which the heart is as the more exalted; and the heart is placed on the left side even with an Emperor.

And the Chief Musician wrote five-and-twenty volumes about the mechanical bird; which were so learned, and so long, and so full of the most difficult Chinese words, that every one said he had read and understood

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them; for otherwise he would have been thought stupid, and would have had the tattoo played upon his back.

Thus passed a whole year: the Emperor, the Court, and every Chinese knew each clucking sound of the song by heart; but just on that very account they found it so beautiful: they could now accompany the song of the bird; and they did do so. The boys in the street sang "zi-zi-zi—kluk-luk-luk;" and the Emperor himself sang it too. Oh, it certainly was very charming!

But one evening, when the artificial bird was in the best part of his song, and the Emperor lay in bed and listened, "snap!" went something in the inside of the bird: a something made "burrrrr!" all the wheels ran round, and the music ceased!

The Emperor jumped quickly out of bed, and sent for his private physician; but what good could he do? Then he sent for the watchmaker; and at last, after much debate and examination, the bird was in some measure put to rights again; but the watchmaker said it must be taken great care

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of; for the pegs were nearly worn out, and could not possibly be renewed; at least not so as to play with any certainty.

That was a source of lamentation! Only once a year did they dare to let the artificial bird sing; and there was a difficulty even about that: but then the principal Musician made a little speech full of his difficult words, and said it was just as good as formerly; and after that it *was* just as good.

Now five years had passed; and there was a great mourning throughout the land: for in reality all cared a good deal about their Emperor. He was now ill, and would not live, it was said: a new Emperor had already been chosen; and the people assembledbefore the palace, and asked the Chamberlain how the Emperor was?

"Peish!" said he, and shook his head.

Chill and pale lay the Emperor in his ample, magnificent bed: all the Court thought he was dead already, and each one had hastened out to salute the new Emperor; the lackeys ran away to have a

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little gossip about it, and the ladies'-maids had a great tea-party.

Every where around, in all the halls and corridors, the floor was covered with cloth, so that not a footfall might be heard; and that was the reason it was so still—so very still. But the Emperor was not yet dead: stiff and pale, there he lay in the magnificent bed with the long velvet curtains and the heavy golden tassels; high above, a window was open, and the moon shone down on the Emperor and on the artificial bird.

The poor Emperor could hardly breathe: he felt as if something was pressing on his chest; he opened his eyes, and saw it was Death that sat on his breast, who had put on his golden crown, and, in one hand held the golden sabre, in the other the splendid banner of the Emperor; and around, from the folds of the great velvet curtains, peeped out the strangest faces, some quite ugly, and others so pleasing, so mild. They were all the good and evil deeds of the Emperor, which stared him in the face now that Death was sitting at his heart.

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"Dost thou remember this?" whispered they, one after the other: "Dost thou remember that?" and then they recounted so much that the drops of sweat stood on his forehead.

"I have never known anything like this," said the Emperor. "Music! Music! the great Chinese gong," cried he, "so that I may not hear what they are saying!"

But they went on; and Death nodded his head quite in the Chinese fashion to all they said.

"Music! Music!" screamed the Emperor. "Oh, dear little artificial bird, sing—oh, sing! I have given thee gold and precious things; I have even given thee my golden slipper to hang around thy neck; sing then—oh, sing!"

But the bird was silent; for no one was there to wind it up—and without that he could not sing; and Death continued gazing at the Emperor with his great empty sockets; and it was quite still the while—fearfully still!

Suddenly was heard, very near the win-

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dow, the tones of the sweetest song: it was the little live Nightingale, that was sitting on a bough without. She had heard of the severe illness of her Emperor, and was now come to sing to him, and bring him hope and consolation.

And, now as she sang, the forms became fainter and fainter, the blood flowed quicker and quicker through the Emperor's weak limbs, and even Death listened and said, "Go on, little Nightingale, go on!"

"And wilt thou give me the magnificent golden sabre? Wilt thou give me the splendid banner, and the Emperor's crown?" said the Nightingale.

And Death gave all these emblems of royalty for a single song: and the Nightingale sang on; and she sang of the peaceful churchyard, where the white roses bloom, where the lilac sends forth its fragrance, and the fresh grass is bedewed by the tears of sorrowing friends. Thereon Death felt a longing after his garden, and, like a cold white shadow, floated hoveringly out of the window.

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"Thanks, thanks!" said the Emperor. "Thou heavenly little bird, I know thee well! I banished thee my dominions, and yet hast thou, by thy song, dispelled the evil faces from my bed, and Death from my heart. How shall I reward thee?"

"Thou hast already rewarded me," said the Nightingale; "I saw tears in thy eyes when I sang to thee for the first time; that I shall never forget. Those are jewels that gladden a singer's heart! But now sleep and get refreshed and well. I will sing to thee!"

And she sang, and the Emperor fell into a sweet sleep; and oh, how calm, how restorative, was that sleep!

The sun shone in at the window when he awoke, strengthened and restored to health: not a single one of his servants was come back, for they all thought him dead; but the Nightingale still sat there and sang.

"Thou shalt always stay with me," said the Emperor; "thou shalt only sing when it pleases thee; and as to the artificial bird, I'll dash it into a thousand pieces."

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"Do not do that," said the Nightingale: "why, he has done what he could. Keep him by you a while longer. I cannot take up my abode in the palace; but let me come when it pleases me; then I will sit of an evening on the bough near the window, and will sing to thee a free song, that thou shalt be at once glad and thoughtful. I will sing to thee of the happy and suffering; I will sing to thee of the good and the evil which lies hidden around thee. The little songster flies far from here, to the poor fisherman, to the cottage of the peasant, to all that are far from thee and thy court. I love thy heart more than thy crown; and yet has the crown an odor of sanctity about it. I will come, I will sing; but one thing must thou promise me!"

"Everything!" said the Emperor, and now he stood in his imperial robes, which he had himself put on; and held the scimitar which was heavy with gold, next to his heart.

"One thing I beg of thee! Tell no one that thou hast a little bird which comes and

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tells thee every thing! It will be much better not!"

And then the Nightingale flew away.

The attendants came in to look after their dead Emperor—yes, there they stood; and the Emperor said, "Good morning!"

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The Elf of the Rose.

BUT in the middle of a garden, a long time ago there stood a rose tree, full of the most beautiful roses; and in one of these, the loveliest of all, dwelt an Elf, who was so very tiny, that no human eye could see him. Behind every rose-leaf he had a bed-chamber: and he

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was as slender and handsome as only a child can be; besides which he had wings that reached from his shoulders to his feet.

Oh, how sweetly odorous were his chambers, and how beautiful and transparent were the walls! Those, you know, were the delicate pink rose-leaves.

The whole day he amused himself in the warm sunshine;—flew from one flower to the other, danced on the wings of the flying butterflies, and counted how many steps he must take to run over all the highways and paths of a single linden-leaf. That was what we should call the veins of the leaf, but he looked on them as highroads and footpaths. For him it was a long and weary way, and before he had finished the sun had gone down; but he had, it is true, begun too late.

It was growing very cold, the dew was falling, the wind blew; the best thing he could do was to go home as fast as he could, so he made as much haste as possible; but the rose was closed already, and he could

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not get in; not a single rose was open. The poor little Elf was sadly frightened; he had never before been a single night from home; he had always slept so sweetly behind the warm rose-leaves, now, he certainly would get his death of cold.

At the other end of the garden was, he knew, a bower of honeysuckle, the flowers of which looked like large painted horns. In one of these would he creep, and sleep there till the next morning.

He flew to the spot. Hush! There were two persons in the bower; a young and handsome man, and a most lovely maiden. They sat near each other, and wished that they might never be separated: they were more to each other than father or mother can ever be to the best of children.

"And yet we must part," said the young man. "Thy brother looketh on us with an evil eye, and, therefore, sends me on a mission far hence, beyond the mountains, and across the sea! Farewell, my sweet one, my betrothed! for such thou art."

And they kissed each other, and the

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young maiden wept, and gave him a rose; but before she did so, she pressed a kiss upon it, so fervent and burning that the rose opened. Instantly the little Elf flew in, and leant his head on the sweetly odorous walls; and he could hear quite well the words "Farewell! farewell!" and he felt that the rose was placed in the bosom of the young man; and oh, how the heart beat! the little Elf could not go to sleep, so violent was the knocking!

But the rose did not remain long in his bosom. The young man took it in his hand, and as he went alone through the dark wood, he kissed the flower so often, and pressed it so to his lips, that the poor Elf was almost crushed to death. He could feel through the leaves how the young man's lips burned, and even the rose had opened as in the warmest noontide sun.

Then came another man through the wood, black-looking and angry. It was the wicked brother of the lovely maiden. He drew a long sharp knife, and while the other kissed the rose, the wicked man stab-

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bed him to death, and cut off his head, and buried it with the body in the soft earth beneath a linden.

"Now he is dead and forgotten!" thought the wicked brother; "he will never return. On a distant journey beyond sea one may easily lose one's life; and so he has. He will not come back, and my sister dare not inquire about him of me!"

So with his feet he scraped the dead leaves over the heaped-up earth, and went home in the dark night: but he went not alone, as he thought he did. The little Elf went with him; he sat in a linden-leaf that was rolled together, which had fallen among the hair of the wicked man while digging the grave. He had now put his hat on, and, it was within, very dark; and the little Elf trembled with fright and rage at the horrid deed.

It was morning when the man came home. He took off his hat and went into his sister's sleeping-room. There lay the lovely blooming maiden, and dreamed of him she so dearly loved, and who she thought was

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crossing mountains, and passing through forests; and the cruel brother bent over her, and laughed as none but a demon can do. Then the withered leaf fell from his hair on the bed-covering; but he did not remark it, and went away to get a little sleep himself.

But the Elf crept out of the withered leaf, went to the ear of the sleeping maiden, and related to her, as in a dream, the dreadful murder; described the spot where her brother had killed her lover, and where the body lay; told her of the blooming linden close by, and said, "Lest you should think what I tell you is a dream, you will find, on awaking, a withered leaf upon your bed.

And she awoke and found the leaf. Oh, what bitter tears she wept! But she dared tell no one of her grief. The window remained open the whole day, so that the little Elf could easily fly out into the garden to the roses and the other flowers; but he had not the heart to leave the sorrowful maiden.

There was a monthly rose in the win-

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dow, and in one of its flowers he seated himself, and there he could be near the poor girl who was so unhappy. Her brother came often into the room, and was so merry and spiteful; but she dared not say a word of her great affliction.

As soon as it was night she stole out of the house, went in the wood to the place where the linden stood, dashed away the leaves from the earth, dug into it, and found the murdered man immediately. Oh, how she wept, and implored God mercifully to let her soon die!

Gladly would she have taken the body home with her, but that she could not do; so she took the pallid head with its closed eyes, kissed the cold lips, and cut away a beautiful lock of long silky hair, which she laid near her heart.

"This will I keep!" said she; and after she had covered the dead body with earth and leaves, she took home with her a little jasmine tree, that grew, full of blossoms, in the wood where the grave was.

As soon as she was in her room, she

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fetched the largest flower-pot she could find, laid in it the beautiful curling hair, covered it with earth, and planted the jasmine-tree in the flower-pot.

"Farewell! farewell!" whispered the little Elf; for he could no longer endure to witness so much grief, and flew off to his rose in the garden. But its flowers were gone; a few faded leaves only hung still on the green bush.

"Alas, how soon is there an end of all that is beautiful and good!" sighed the Elf. At last, however, he found a rose; he alighted among its fragrant leaves, and made it his home.

Every morning he flew to the window of the poor sorrowing maiden: there she always stood beside her flower-pot, and wept. The bitter tears fell upon the jasmine; and while she grew paler and paler from day to day, the little slip grew fresher and greener; one shoot put forth after the other, and the delicate buds unfolded themselves in flowers; and she kissed them. But the cruel brother scolded, and asked

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if she were gone mad? He said he could not comprehend why she always wept over the flower-pot, and would not have her do so.

He little knew what secret lay within the dark mould. But she knew it; and she leaned her head against the flower-pot; and while thus sleeping the little Elf discovered her. He mounted to her ear, told her of the evening passed in the bower, of the fragrance of the rose, and of the loves of the Elves; and so she dreamed sweetly, and while she dreamed her life departed: the beautiful angel of death conveyed her spirit away from this world, and she was in heaven with him she loved.

And the jasmine opened its large white flowers, and shed around an odor of wondrous sweetness; it was the only way in which it could deplore the departed!

But the wicked brother beheld the beautifully-blooming tree, took it for his own, and placed it in his sleeping-room beside his bed. The tree was lovely to behold; and its fragrance sweet and grateful. The

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little Elf went with it, flew from one flower to the other, in each of which dwelt a little spirit; and to these he told how the young man had been murdered, whose beautiful curling locks lay under their roots; and he told them of the cruel brother, and of his poor sister.

"We know it!" said each spirit in the flower. "We know it! Have we not grown up from the shining hair of the dead? We know it!" And then they nodded their heads in a strange manner.

The Elf of the Rose could not comprehend how they could be so calm; and he flew to the bees that gather honey, and told them the history of the wicked brother; and the bees told it to their queen, who ordered that on the following morning they should kill the murderer.

But the night before,—it was the first night after the sister's death, when the brother was sleeping close beside the jasmine,—the chalice of every flower opened, and unseen, but armed with a poisonous sting, every spirit of the flower came forth,

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and sat first at his ear, and sent such shocking dreams to his brain, as made him, for the first time, tremble at the deed he had done; and then they flew to his lips, and stung him in the tongue with their poisonous darts.

"Now we have avenged the dead!" said they; and flew back again into the bells of the white jasmine.

At daybreak, when the window of the sleeping-room was thrown open, in rushed the Elf of the Rose, with the queen, and the whole swarm of bees, to kill the murderer.

But he was dead already! Around the bed people were standing, who said, "The odor of the strong-scented jasmine has killed him!"

Then the Elf understood the vengeance of the flowers, and told it to the queen-bee; and she buzzed with her whole swarm around the flower-pot.

It was impossible to drive the bees away. Then a man took the flower-pot to carry it out; but one of the bees stung him in the

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hand, so that he let it fall, and it was broken in pieces.

Then they all saw the beautiful hair of the murdered man, and so they knew that the dead man in the bed was a murderer.

The queen of the bees hummed about in the air, and sang of the vengeance of the flowers, of the Elf of the Rose; and that behind the very smallest leaf there dwelleth one who makes known every act of wickedness, and can avenge it.

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Holger Danske.

IN Denmark is a very old castle, called Kronburg. It lies near the Sound, where large ships sail daily past by hundreds: English, and Russian, and Prussian ships. And they salute the old castle with their cannon,—"Boom!"

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and the castle answers with its cannon,—"Boom!" for this is the way the cannons say, "Good morning," and "Much obliged to you."

But in winter no ships sail by; for the water is then all covered with ice as far as Sweden. It is quite like a highway. Danish and Swedish flags are waving there; and Danes and Swedes say to each other,—"Good morning!" and "Much obliged to you!" yet not with cannons, but with friendly shakes of the hand; and the one people go over to fetch wheaten bread and cracknel biscuits from the other; for we always like what we get abroad better than home-fare. But the most magnificent of the whole is, after all, the old Castle of Kronburg; and here it is that Holger Danske sleeps in the deep dark cellar, where no one even enters. He is clad in steel and iron, and rests his head on his stalwart arm; his long beard falls over the marble table, to which it has grown fast; he sleeps and dreams, but in his dream he sees all that is going on in Denmark. Every Christmas-eve

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an angel comes and tells him that what he has dreamed is true, and that he may go to sleep again; for that Denmark is as yet in no real danger. But should it be so, old Holger Danske will arise, and the table will split in twain when he draws his beard towards him. He then advances and strikes a blow that is heard in all the countries of the world.

All this about Holger Danske was told by an old grandpapa to his little grandson; and the child knew that what grandpapa said was true. And while the old man told his story, he worked at a large figure of wood representing Holger Danske, which was intended for the figure-head of a ship; for the old grandfather was a carver, and made figures to be placed at the prows of vessels, according to their names: and here he had cut out Holger Danske, with his long beard and his slender figure, standing so proudly with his broad battle-sword in one hand, and the other resting on the arms of Denmark.

And the old grandfather told so many

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things about remarkable Danish men and women, that at last his little grandchild thought he knew quite as much as Holger Danske could know, who, after all, only dreamed about the matter; and when the little fellow was in bed, he thought so much about it, that he quite pressed his chin upon the counterpane, and it seemed to him as if he had a long beard, and that the two were grown together.

The old grandfather remained sitting at his work, and was carving the last bit he had to do: it was the Danish arms. Now he had finished; and he looked at the whole, and thought of all he had read and heard, and of what he had told the little boy that evening; and he nodded and wiped his spectacles, put them on his nose again, and said,—"Yes, Holger Danske will hardly appear in my time. But the boy there in bed may get a sight of him, and be present when the great day comes." And then the old grandfather nodded; and the more he looked at his Holger Danske, the more clearly he saw that the figure he had made

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was a good one; it almost seemed to him as if it had a color, and as though the armor grew bright like real steel and iron. The hearts of the Danish arms grew redder and redder, and the lions leaped up with crowns of gold upon their heads.

"That's the very finest coat-of-arms in the world," said the old man. "The lions denote strength, and the hearts love and clemency." And he looked at the uppermost lion, and thought of King Canute, who bound mighty England to the throne of Denmark; and he gazed at the second lion, and thought of Waldemar who collected the scattered states of Denmark and conquered the countries of the Vandals; he looked at the third lion, and thought of Margaret, who united Denmark, and Sweden, and Norway; but when he looked at the red hearts, they seemed more ruddy than before, —they grew into flames that moved, and he followed each one in thought.

The first flame led him to a narrow dark prison: there sat a captive—a noble woman, Eleonora Ulfeld, Christian the Fourth's

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daughter; and the flame settled like a rose upon her bosom, and there it bloomed with her heart—with the heart of her, the best and noblest of all Danish women.

"Yes, that is one heart in the army of Denmark!" said the old grandfather.

And his thoughts followed the other flame, that led him upon the sea where the cannons thundered, and the ships lay enwrapped in smoke; and the flame fixed itself, like the ribbon of an order of knighthood, on the breast of Hvitfeldt, as, for the preservation of the fleet, he blew up himself and his ship.

And the third flame led him to Greenland's needy huts, where stood the pastor Hans Egede with love in his words and deeds. The flame was a star on his breast, a heart for the arms of Denmark; and the thoughts of the old grandfather preceded the buoyant flame, for he well knew where it would go to. In the humble room of the peasant woman stood Frederick the Sixth, and wrote his name with chalk on the rafters. The flame trembled on his breast,

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trembled in his heart; in the room of the peasant his heart became a heart for Denmark's arms. And the old grandfather dried his eyes; for he had lived for King Frederick, with his venerable silver hair and honest blue eyes; he had known him too—and he folded his hands, and gazed silently before him. Then the old man's daughter-in-law came in, and said it was late; that it was time to leave off work, and that supper was ready.

"But what you have made is really quite beautiful, grandfather," said she. Holger Danske and our old arms complete! It seems to me that I have seen that face before!"

"No, that cannot well be," said the old grandfather. "But I have seen it, and have tried to carve it in wood from memory. It was when the English were lying in the roadstead, on the second of April, when we showed that we were true old Danes. On the 'Denmark,' when I was in the squadron under Steen Billes, a man stood beside me: it was as if the balls were afraid of him!

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Merrily did he sing the old songs, and fired and fought as though he were more than human! I still remember his countenance; but whence he came, or whither he went, I know not. No one knows! I have often thought that it was old Holger Danske himself, who had swam down from Kronburg, and had aided in the hour of danger. That was my fancy, and there stands his likeness."

And the figure threw its large shadow quite high upon the wall, even on the ceiling; and it looked as if it were really Holger Danske himself that was standing there, for the shadow moved; but that might be because the flame of the lamp did not burn steadily. And the daughter-in-law kissed the old grandfather, and drew him towards the great arm-chair before the table; and she and her husband, who was, of course, the son of the old man, and the father of the little boy lying in bed, ate their evening meal; and the old grandfather told about the Danish lion and the Danish hearts; told them about strength and gentleness. And

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he explained, quite distinctly, that there is another strength besides that which lies in the sword; and he pointed to the shelf where old books were lying, where the collected comedies of Holberg were; books which had been read and re-read, so amusing were they: you fancied that all the persons in them were known to you since many a-day.

"Look you! he could use his chisel too," said the grandfather. "What was false and cross-grained in people, he chiselled away as well as he could!" And the old man gave a nod of his head in the direction of the looking-glass, in which was struck the calendar, with "the Round Tower" on the cover; and he said, "Tycho Brahe, too, was one of those who used the sword—not to hew into flesh and blood, but to clear a more distinct path between all the stars of heaven! And then he, whose father was of my craft, the old sculptor's son; he with the white hair and strong shoulders, whom we ourselves have read about; he, in short, who is talked of in all the countries of

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the world*—ah, he could work in stone; I can only carve in wood! Yes, yes, Holger Danske can come in many ways, in order that one may hear of Denmark's power in all parts of the world!"

But the little boy in bed saw distinctly the old castle of Kronburg and the Sound, and the real Holger Danske, who sat deep under the earth, with his beard grown fast to the marble table, dreaming of all that is going on above. Holger Danske dreamed, too, of the little humble room where the carver sat; he heard all that was spoken, nodded in his dream, and said:

"Yes, remember me, ye Danish people! Give thought unto me. I will come in the hour of need!"

And the bright day shone in brilliancy outside the castle of Kronburg, and the wind bore the sounds of the hunter's horn across from the neighboring land; the ships sailed by, and saluted, "Boom, Boom!"

* Thorwaldsen.

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And from Kronburg came the answer, 'Boom, Boom!"

But Holger Danske did not awake, let them fire as loud as they may; for you know, it was only "Good day," and "Very much obliged," that they said. There must be a different sort of firing before he will awake; but awake he is sure to do, for strength and power dwell in Holger Danske.

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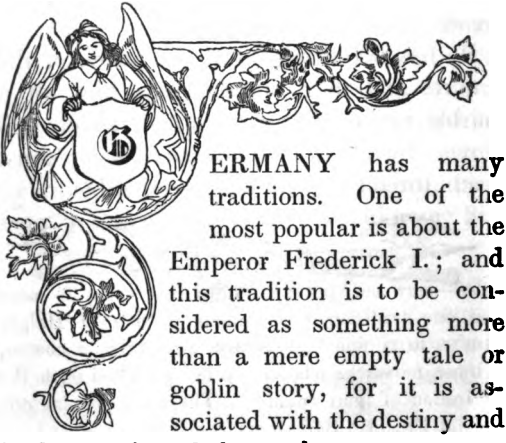
The Emperor Frederic Barbarossa.

A CHAPTER BY THE TRANSLATOR.*



GERMANY has many traditions. One of the most popular is about the Emperor Frederick I.; and this tradition is to be considered as something more than a mere empty tale or goblin story, for it is associated with the destiny and the hopes of a whole people.

* Those children for whom I have translated these

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Frederic Barbarossa.

Well, this mighty Emperor, this "greatest hero of the Christian world," who, while he reigned, strove incessantly to make the German empire what it once had been, is said to be still alive.

It is said that he sits spell-bound in the Kyfhauser mountain; and that the spell will not be broken until the day of judgment, unless his country should be in the dreadest need.

He has taken with him the jewels of the empire, and they stand beside him on a marble table. His fiery beard, which still grows during his enchanted sleep, must reach three times round the table before he will awake. As yet, however, it goes

Tales—may not, perhaps, know that there is more than one tradition very similar to that of Holger Danske, to be found in Germany, relating, of course, to those monarchs who, while living, called forth the admiration of their country. The most popular one is about Frederic Barbarossa, who—but as what I am going to tell you would make rather a long note, I have concluded to give the German emperor a chapter to himself.—C. B.

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round but twice. His sword is in his hand in readiness, and he waits till his day shall come.

Some shepherds, 'tis said, have seen him, and he has asked, "Do the ravens still fly round the mountain?" and when answered in the affirmative, he has again rested his head upon his hand, and said, "Then I must sleep for another hundred years!"

And why, you will ask, should the people think that he is still alive? Because the nation could not bring themselves to believe, that the great monarch who for near forty years had ruled as German Emperor; who had gone forth with his tens—ay, with his hundreds—of thousands of soldiers to battle—that he, the noble, the magnanimous, the indomitable Emperor, who had made the restoration of the German empire, as it had once been, the aim of his whole life, could possibly have left them forever. When, I say, his astounded people were told that he was no more—that they would never again behold his glorious countenance;

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when they saw the Crusaders coming back from the struggle with the Infidel, and missed the chief who had led them forth in power; when asking for him, they were told he lay entombed at Antioch,—then all were struck dumb with amazement, and men knew not what to think.

The Holy Land was a far distant country, around which was mystery. The eager questioners about the circumstances of their hero's death heard various accounts; and when men began to wake from their bewilderment, they whispered to each other doubts of what they had been told—doubts of his being really dead! They forgot his mortal nature, and remembered him only as what to their minds he had ever been,—as a guiding spirit, sent on earth by Heaven for the accomplishment of some great destiny.

Could he, then, have ceased to be? Could he have left them thus suddenly, far from his own native land? The more they pondered, the stronger grew the pleasing hope that he was still with his people, and that

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when the day should arrive for the fulfilment of his darling scheme, he would certainly come forth again, and lead his chosen to victory. And in this thought they found consolation. From a hope it became a certainty, and henceforth they clung to this creation of their fancy with all the devotedness of veneration and of love.

Thus we see that the tradition in question is not a tale invented for mere amusement's sake, but rather the visible form which the cherished feeling of a whole people has taken in expressing itself—the tangible shape assumed by the hopes and longings of the nation in giving themselves vent.

It is true such a belief could hardly spring up now; but this, you must remember, was in days six hundred years ago. Many circumstances have happened since to make men's minds different to what they then were. There is no probability of such a tradition becoming prevalent about Napoleon.

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Though many a veteran may have stood lost in thought beside his tomb, and have wished the while it were possible for his General to hear the tramp of the thousands as they marched near his resting-place, or that the drum's long rolling could reach him in his coffin; though, too, the fanciful wish may have been imparted to some trusty comrade, old soldier like himself, yet it would never be spoken of as a thing that might be.

Many a one even has most assuredly seen, in his mind's eye, the well-known figure of his Emperor standing, as it were, before him, and with all the reality of life, while dwelling on some vividly-remembered event of past days. Nevertheless, we are sure to hear no tradition of the Emperor going his rounds beneath the dome of the Invalides, while still watching over the destinies of France. Men's minds are changed.

You must know, too, that the desire of Barbarossa to re-establish the holy Roman Empire under one head, makes his memory

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especially dear to Germany; for there even now men talk of its fulfilment: not. indeed, as an event likely to be accomplished, but as one most ardently to be desired. Still many a heart beats quicker at the mention of such a state of things; there are many still, who, like Barbarossa, view this as the grandest aim of all human striving.

Can we wonder, then, that the Germans love to dwell on this pleasing vision, connected as it is with so much that is dear to their countrymen? It is like a shadow falling on the stream of time, but the event that casts the shade is behind them, out of sight, and beyond their reach.

The most natural spot for the abode of such a sleeper would be some mountain solitude. Childhood is always poetical; and I do not doubt that those of my young readers who have stood on the dreary heights of Westmoreland, or amid the still grander mountain scenery of the Continent, will have felt its influence, and without being cowards, have experienced a sort of dread at the awful stillness around them.

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There is nothing there to disturb the slumberer; not a sound is heard of man or beast; for not a creature comes up into that realm of dreariness: the very rocks seem spellbound, and lying in an enchanted sleep.

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The Dying Child.

TRANSLATED BY MARY HOWITT.

MOTHER, I'm tired, and I would fain be sleeping;
Let me repose upon thy bosom seek;
But promise me that thou wilt leave off weeping,
Because thy tears fall hot upon my cheek.
Here it is cold: the tempest raveth madly;
But in my dreams all is so wondrous bright.
I see the angel-children smiling gladly,
When from my weary eyes I shut out light.

Mother, one stands beside me now! and, listen!
Dost thou not hear the music's sweet accord?
See how his white wings beautifully glisten!
Surely those wings were given him by our Lord!

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The Dying Child.

Green, gold and red are floating all around me:
  They are the flowers the angel scattereth.
Shall I have also wings whilst life has bound me?
  Or, mother, are they given alone in death?

Why dost thou clasp me as if I were going?
  Why dost thou press thy cheek thus unto mine?
Thy cheek is hot, and yet thy tears are flowing:
  I will, dear mother, will be always thine!
Do not sigh thus—it marreth my reposing;
  And, if thou weep, then I must weep with thee?
Oh, I am tired—my weary eyes are closing:
  Look, mother, look! the angel kisseth me!

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Part XXX.

Little Ellie.

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Little Ellie.

THERE was once upon a time a young woman, and she was so kind, so sweet-tempered, that every body loved her. Among the rest there was an old witch who lived near where she dwelt, and with whom she was a great favorite. One day

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she went to the old witch, and said to her: "I would give anything to have a nice little child of my own: do but tell me how to accomplish my wish!"

"Oh! we'll soon manage that!" replied the old witch. "Look ye here at this barley-corn! It is not like those that grow in the fields, or what the fowls are fed with. This you must plant in a flower-pot, and then wait and see what will happen."

"A thousand thanks!" said the other, putting some silver in the witch's hand. She then went home and planted the barley-corn as the old woman had told her. A beautiful large flower soon shot up out of the flower-pot, but its leaves were all closed like buds that were soon to open.

"What a beautiful flower!" said the wife, at the same time kissing the red and yellow leaves; but scarcely had she pressed her lips on the flower, when there was a loud report, and the calix opened. She now saw that it was a real tulip, and in the middle of the cup sat, on the still green seed-stalk, a charming little maiden, so delicate and

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lovely, and yet that was only an inch high; on which account she gave her the name of "Ellie."*

She made the baby a cradle out of a polished walnut-shell, gave her blue violets as mattress, and a rose-leaf for counterpane. In this cradle little Ellie slept at night; by day she played on the table. Here a plate full of water was placed, surrounded by a garland of flowers that dipped their stems in the water: in the middle, a large tulip-leaf was swimming, and on this Ellie was to sit, and to sail from one side of the plate to the other; and two white horse-hairs served as oars to row her boat with. All this looked exceedingly pretty; besides, Ellie could sing, and with so sweet a voice that the like nobody ever had heard.

* This tale is called "Ellise" in the original; a name given to the beautiful daughters of the fairy-people in the mythology of the North. As, however, to the English reader the word would not have conveyed the original idea of a diminutive being, I preferred giving the story the title I have.—The Translator.

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One night, as she lay in her nice little bed, an ugly, yellow toad hopped in through the broken window-pane. The creature was large and ugly, and jumped right upon the table where Ellie lay asleep under the rose-leaf.

"Why that would be a pretty wife for my son," said the toad; then it seized with its mouth the nutshell in which Ellie was, and hopped with it through the window into the garden.

Here was a large piece of water, but the banks were marshy; and there the toad and her son lived. Faugh! how ugly the son was! all spotted with green and yellow, just like his mother; and all he had to say when he saw the pretty little maiden in the nutshell was, "Croak! Cr-rr-oa-oa-k! Cr-r-r-oak!"

"Don't speak so loud," said his mother: "If you do, she may wake up and escape, for she is lighter than swans' down. We will take her out on the river and put her on the leaf of a water-lily; to her that will be a large island; and thence she cannot

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escape; and we, meanwhile, will build a festal hall below in the mud, where you two shall live together."

Innumerable plants were growing in the water, with their broad green leaves looking as though they floated on the stream. The one that grew farthest off was at the same time the largest, and thither the old toad swam, and set the walnut-shell with the little maiden upon it.

Poor little Ellie awoke early on the following morning; and when she looked about her and saw where she was, that her new dwelling was surrounded with water, and that there was no possible way by which she could get to land, she began to weep bitterly.

The old toad sat, meanwhile, in the marsh, and decorated the hall with reeds and the leaves of the water-lily, so that it might look nice for her future daughter-in-law; and then, in company with her frightful son, she swam to the island lily-leaf, where Ellie was. They wanted to fetch her pretty little bed, that it might at once be

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placed in the chamber before Ellie herself came there.

The old toad bowed most politely to her in the water, at the same time that she introduced her son with the words—"Here you behold my son; he is to be your husband; and you both can live together delightfully down below there in the mud!"

"Cr-oa-oa-oa-k! Cr-oa-oa-oa-k! Breckkekek!" was all the bridegroom could find to say in reply.

On this they both took the charming little bed and swam away with it; but Ellie sat alone on the leaf and cried, for she could not bear to live with the ugly toad of a mamma, and still less to have her hideous son for a husband. The little fishes that swam below in the water had probably seen the toad, and heard what she said; for they put up their heads that they might have a look at the little maiden. As soon as they had seen her, they were touched by her beauty, and they were very sorry that such a charming little damsel should become

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the prey of a nasty toad. They therefore assembled round the green stem on which the leaf grew where Ellie was, and gnawed it in two with their teeth; and now leaf and Ellie, slowly and gently, floated down the stream, far away out of reach of the toad.

Thus the little maiden sailed along, past towns and villages; and when the birds on the trees perceived her, they sang aloud, "Oh, what a charming little maid!" But away, away floated the leaf, always further and further; Ellie was making quite a foreign voyage upon it.

Then there came a small white butterfly, and after fluttering about a long time, settled at last on her leaf, because Ellie pleased him; she, too, was glad of the visit; for she knew it would be impossible for the toad to overtake her now. The country she passed through was very beautiful; and the sun shone on the water, making it glitter like gold. It now entered her head to take off her girdle, and bind one end of it to the butterfly, and the other to the leaf;

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so that it went along much quicker, and she got more expeditiously through the world, and saw a great deal more of its beauties and wonders.

As she was thus sailing along so charmingly a cockchafer flew by, who laid hold of her thin waist with his long nippers, and flew away with her up into a tree, while the leaf of the water-lily, that was obliged to follow the butterfly, floated on; for Ellie had bound him so firmly that he could not get loose.

Oh, how frightened was poor Ellie when the cockchafer flew away with her into the tree! She was, too, so sorry for the little butterfly, who now would perish, unless he could liberate himself from her girdle and the green leaf.

But all this did not trouble the chafer; he put her down on a large leaf, gave her honey to eat, which had been gathered from the flowers, and told her she was quite charming, although she was not at all like a chafer.

Before long all the other cockchafers that

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lived in the tree made their appearance, and paid their respects to Ellie, stared at her from head to foot, while the young-lady chafers turned up their feelers and said, "She has but two legs; and that looks very wretched. She has no feelers either," said they; "and is, moreover, as small round the waist as a human being! It's very ugly, I declare! it is really hideous!" cried out all the young-lady chafers at once. And yet our sweet Ellie was really the most engaging little being imaginable.

And so the cockchafer that had carried her off thought too; but because all the lady chafers said she was ugly, he began at last to think so himself, and therefore would have nothing more to say to her; she might go where she chose, he said; and with these words he flew with her over the ground, and set her on a daisy.

The poor thing wept, because she was so ugly that not even a cockchafer would have anything to do with her. But, despite the opinion of the young-lady chafers, which was certainly a very important one, Ellie

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was the most lovely little creature in the world, as delicate and beautiful as a young rose-leaf.

All that long summer poor Ellie lived quite alone, in the large forest. She wove herself a bed of fine grasses, which she then hung up under a burdock-leaf, that it might not be washed away by the rain. For food she gathered the honey from the flower-cups; and she drank the fresh dew that every morning stood in glittering drops upon the leaves.

Thus passed the summer and autumn; but now came the cold long winter. All the birds that had sung so prettily to Ellie forsook her now; the trees lost their foliage, the flowers faded, and the large burdock-leaf, which hitherto had served her for shelter, shrunk together, till nothing but a dry yellow stalk was left, and she was so cold, for her clothes were in rags; and she herself was so delicate and small! Poor Ellie shivered; she was almost frozen to death!

It began, too, to snow, and every flake

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that struck her was as much to her as a whole shovel-full would be for us, her whole body being only an inch long. To protect herself from the weather, she wrapped herself up in a dead leaf; but there was no warmth in it, and she trembled from head to foot with cold.

Close to the wood where Ellie lay was a large corn-field; but the corn had long been cut, and only the dried stubble now stood above the ground; but to Ellie this was a wood, and hither she came. So she chanced to arrive at the house of a field-mouse, which consisted of a little hole among the roots of the corn-stubble. Here, warm and comfortable, dwelt the field-mouse; she had her whole room stored full of corn for the winter; and besides it a nice little kitchen and larder. Poor Ellie approached the door like a little beggar child, and prayed for a morsel of barley-corn to eat; for she had tasted nothing for two whole days.

"Poor little thing!" said the field-mouse, who was very good-hearted; "come into

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my warm room, and eat some of my bread." And as Ellie pleased her, she said, "Perhaps you would like to pass the winter in my house; but then you must keep my room clean, and tell me fairy tales to amuse me; for that is what I like more than any thing." Ellie did what the good mouse required, and in return had a very comfortable life.

"We shall soon have visitors," said the field-mouse to her one day, soon after Ellie was settled in her place. "My neighbor usually pays me a visit once a-week. He lives in much grander style than I; for he has many splendid chambers, and wears costly fur. If you could get him for a husband, you were then well provided for; however, his sight is not very good. But you must not fail to tell him the prettiest stories, and sing for him the most touching songs, that you know."

But Ellie would listen to nothing of the sort; for she could not bear the sight of their neighbor, because he was a mole. He really did come to pay the mouse a

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visit; and, true enough, had on fur as soft as velvet. He was very rich and very learned, the field-mouse said; and his house was more than twenty times larger than hers. As to his being learned, there was not a doubt about it; but he detested the sun and the gay flowers, and spoke of both with contempt, though he had never seen either.

Ellie was obliged to sing to him; so she sang two songs, "Fly away, lady-bird, fly away home!" and "The priest goes to the field!" Her beautiful voice so pleased the mole, that he fell in love with her; but he took good care not to show it; for he was a most sensible personage.

A short time before, he had made a long passage from his dwelling to that of his neighbor; and he now gave Ellie and the mouse permission to walk in it as often as they pleased. He begged them, at the same time, not to be frightened at the dead bird that lay at the entrance. It was, no doubt, a bird that had just died; for it had all its feathers on, and seemed to have been

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buried at the spot where the mole had built his gallery.

Neighbor mole then took a bit of touch-wood in his mouth, for it shines just like fire in the dark, and went before to light them through the dark passage; and when he came to the spot where the dead bird lay, he gave the earth a push with his snout, so that the mould rolled down and made a large opening, through which the daylight fell.

Ellie could now see the dead bird quite well—it was a swallow. Its pretty wings were pressed close to its body, and its feet and head drawn back under the feathers.

"The poor bird is certainly frozen to death," said Ellie; and she was heartily sorry for the poor animal, for she loved birds dearly, because they had sung to her the whole summer long.

But the mole gave it a push with his foot, and said, "There is an end of all his fine singing now! It really must be a wretched existence to be a bird! Thank heaven, my children won't be birds. Why, such a poor

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feathery thing has nothing in the world except his 'chirp,' 'chirp,' and when winter comes he must starve."

"Yes, indeed, you may well say that," replied the mouse. "And with all his fine 'chirp,' 'chirp,' what has a bird got when winter is come? Starvation and cold, that's all? But that I suppose is thought very grand."

Ellie was silent; but when the others turned their backs, she bent over the bird, put aside the feathers which lay over its head, and kissed its closed eyes.

"Perhaps it was you who sang me such pretty songs," thought she. "How often have you delighted me, my dear, beautiful bird!"

The mole then stopped up the opening again through which the daylight had entered, and escorted the two ladies home. But Ellie could not sleep that night. She got up out of bed, platted a mat of hay, carried it to where the dead bird was, spread it over him, and covered him up on every side with soft cotton, which she had

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found in the field-mouse's parlor, that he might rest more warmly than on the cold earth.

"Farewell, pretty little bird," said she, "farewell! and many thanks for your friendly song last summer, when all the trees were green, and the sun shone down upon us all so warmly!"

Then she laid her little head on the bosom of the bird, but she was sadly frightened; for it seemed to her as if something moved within. It was the heart of the bird, who was not dead, but only lay benumbed, and came to life again when penetrated by the warmth.

In autumn the swallows fly to warm countries, but when there is a weakling among them, which tarries behind until the winter sets in, it becomes benumbed with the cold, so that it falls to the ground and lies in a torpid state till the chill snow covers it.

At first Ellie was frightened when the bird began to move, for compared to her he was a giant; but she soon took courage,

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tucked in the covering all around the exhausted creature, and then fetched the mint leaf which had hitherto served her as a pillow, in order to put it over the poor bird's head.

The following night she again stole away to the swallow, whom she now found quite revived, but still so weak that he could only open his eyes a few times to look at Ellie, who held a bit of touchwood in her hand that she might see his face.

"A thousand thanks, you pretty little child," said the sick swallow. "I am so warmed through, that I shall soon recover my strength, and be able to fly out again into the warm sunshine."

"Oh, it is still much too cold out of doors," answered Ellie. "It snows and freezes still. You must stay in your warm bed, and I will nurse you and take care of you."

She now brought the bird some water in a leaf, which he drank; and he told her how he had hurt his wings with some brambles so much that he was not able to

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fly away to the warm countries with his companions, but had fallen exhausted to the earth, and had lost all power of recollection, so that it did not know how it had come there.

The little swallow remained here the whole winter, and Ellie tended him and liked him better and better every day; but she told the mole and the field-mouse nothing of the matter, for she knew very well that neither of them could bear the poor bird.

As soon as summer was come and the genial rays of the sun penetrated the earth, the swallow bade Ellie farewell; for she had opened the hole in the ground through which the mole had let in the light. The sun shone so cheerily that the swallow asked his faithful nurse if she would not fly away with him. She might sit on his back, and then they would fly away together to the wood. But Ellie thought it would grieve the old field-mouse if she were to leave her in secret, and therefore she felt obliged to decline the kind invitation of the swallow.

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"Farewell, then, good little maiden," said the swallow, and flew off into the pleasant sunshine. Ellie looked after him sorrowfully, and tears came into her eyes; for she liked the friendly bird very much, and was sorry to part from him. She felt quite forlorn now he was gone.

"Chirup! chirup! chirup!" sang the swallow, and flew away toward the green wood.

Ellie was now very sad, for she was not allowed to go out of the dark hole to enjoy the warm sunshine. The corn grew up above her, and formed quite a thick wood before the dwelling of the field-mouse.

"You can employ the summer in getting your wedding-clothes ready, and what you want in housekeeping," said the mouse; for her neighbor, the tiresome mole, had really proposed for Ellie.

"I will give you all you want, both woollen and linen," said the mouse, "so that you may have a house full when you are the wife of the mole."

So Ellie was obliged to spin at the bobbins,

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and the field-mouse hired four spiders that were forced to weave day and night. Every evening the mole came to pay a visit, and always spoke of his wish that summer would soon be over, that there might be an end of the heat; and when winter should come, then was to be the wedding. But Ellie was not at all glad; for she could not bear the sight of the ugly mole, though his fur was as rich and soft as velvet.

Morning and evening she stole to the door; and when the breeze blew the ears of corn apart, and she could see the blue sky, she thought it was so beautiful and bright out there in the open air, and she wished with all her heart that she might see the little swallow once again. But no swallow came; he was, no doubt, enjoying the warm sunshine far away in the green wood.

As autumn approached, Ellie was ready with her wedding-things.

"In four weeks you will be married," said the old field-mouse; but Ellie wept,

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and said she would not have the tiresome mole for a husband.

"Fiddle de dee!" answered the field-mouse. "Don't be refractory, or I shall give you a bite with my sharp teeth; is not your future husband a very handsome man? Even the Queen has not such a dress of beautiful velvet fur to show as he has! His larder and cellar are full, and you may thank your stars that you can be so well provided for."

Now, then, was to be the wedding! The mole was already come to fetch Ellie, who in future was to live with him deep under the earth, where no sunbeam could ever penetrate. The poor thing was quite melancholy at the thought of taking leave of the dear sun, which, as long as she was with the field-mouse, she could at least see from the door; and she begged so hard, that the mouse gave her leave to go out and see it for the last time.

"Farewell, beloved sun!" said she, raising her hands to the sky, and advancing some steps from the house; for the harvest

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was over, and the dry stubble again on the field. "Farewell! farewell!" repeated she, and twined her arms round a little flower that stood near her. "Remember me to the swallow if you should chance to see him."

"Chirrup! chirrup! chirrup!" resounded at the same moment; and when Ellie lifted up her eyes, she saw the very same well-known swallow fly by. As soon as the bird perceived Ellie, he instantly flew to his kind nurse, who told him how unwilling she was to take the ugly mole for her husband; and that she was to live with him under-ground, where the sun and moon would never shine. At these words she burst into tears.

"Winter will soon be here," said the swallow, "and I shall fly far away to the warm countries. If you will travel with me, I will willingly take you on my back. You have only to bind yourself on firmly with your girdle, and off we will fly far away from the hateful mole and his dark chamber, over mountain and valley, to

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those beautiful lands where the sun shines much more warmly than here; where ceaseless summer reigns, and bright flowers are always blooming. Take courage, and fly with me, good little Ellie; you who saved my life when I lay frozen and almost dead on the earth!"

"Yes, I will fly with you," exclaimed Ellie joyfully. She mounted on the back of the swallow, supported her feet on his wings, fastened herself by her girdle to a strong feather, and flew away with him high over woods and lakes, over valley and mountain. When they passed over icy or snowy glaciers, Ellie often felt cold; but then she crept under the feathers of the bird, covered herself all over, and only put out her head to admire all the wonders below her.

At last they arrived in the warm countries. There the sun shone brighter than with us; the sky was as high again, and on walls and palings grew the finest blue and green grapes. Ripe oranges and citrons hung in the groves, and the fragrance of myrtles

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and of jasmine rose in the air, while lovely children played about with the most brilliantly painted butterflies. But the swallow flew further and further, and beneath them the country became always more and more beautiful.

On the banks of a lake, amid magnificent acacias, stood a marble palace, built in long-past days. Vines twined themselves round its columns, on which, high above, many swallows' nests were hanging. Into one of these nests the swallow carried Ellie.

"Here is my home," said he; "but do you seek out one of the loveliest flowers that grow yonder for your dwelling; then I will carry you thither, and you shall make yourself as comfortable as you please; your every wish shall be readily and cheerfully fulfilled."

"Oh, that will be delightful indeed!" exclaimed Ellie, and clapped her little hands with joy.

On the ground lay a large white marble pillar, that had fallen down, and was broken in three pieces; but between each fragment

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the most beautiful white flowers grew luxuriantly.

The swallow flew with Ellie to one of these flowers, and set her down on a broad leaf; but how astonished was Ellie when she saw that in the flower a little mannikin was sitting, as delicate and transparent as glass. He wore a small golden crown on his head, and the most beautiful bright wings on his shoulders; and he was not a whit larger than Ellie herself. This was the sylph of the flower. In each flower dwelt such a little man with his wife; but this was the king of all the sylphs of the flowers.

"Oh, how handsome this king is!" whispered Ellie in the swallow's ear. The little prince started at the sudden arrival of the great bird; but when he saw Ellie he became enamored of her, for she was the most beautiful maiden he had ever seen. Then he took off his golden crown, set it on Ellie's head, and asked her name, and if she would be his wife, and so become queen of all the flowers.

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Now that, to be sure, was a different sort of husband to the son of the ugly toad, or the tiresome mole with the costly fur! So Ellie said "Yes" to the little prince; and then a lady appeared, and then a gentleman, out of all the other flowers, so lovely, that it was quite a pleasure to see them, and each of them brought a present to Ellie. The best gift that was offered her was a pair of beautiful white wings, which were fastened on her shoulders immediately; and now she too could fly from flower to flower—that was such a delight!

The joy was universal. The little swallow sat on high in his nest, and sang as well as he could, though he was very sad; for he had a great affection for Ellie, and did not wish to part from her.

"You shall not be called Ellie any longer," said the sylph; "for that is not a pretty name, and you are so very beautiful. Henceforward we will call you Maia."*

"Farewell, farewell!" cried then the little swallow, and flew away again from the

* Maria.

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Little Ellie,—Page 32.

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warm land, far, far away; off to little Denmark, where he has his nest just over the window of the room in which dwells the poet who can tell delightful tales, and there sings to him his "Chirrup! chirrup! chirrup!" It was he who told us the whole of this wonderful story.

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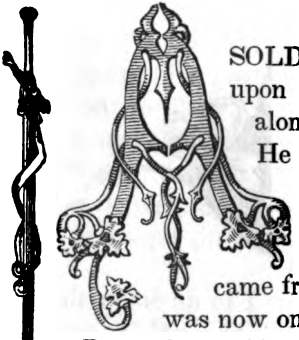
The Tinder-Box.



A SOLDIER, came once upon a time, marching along on the highway. He had his knapsack upon his back, and his sword by his side; for he came from the wars, and was now on his way home.

Presently an old witch met him; she was a loathsome-looking creature; for her under-lip hung down over her chin.

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"Good evening, soldier!" said she. "What a beautiful sword you have there, and what a fine large knapsack! You look truly like a brave soldier; and therefore you shall have as much money as you can wish for!"

"Thank ye, old witch!" replied the soldier. "That would be very acceptable indeed."

"Do you see that great tree yonder?" asked the witch, pointing to a stout oak that stood by the wayside. "That tree is quite hollow; and if you will climb up to the top, you will see a hole in the trunk, through which you can slide down and get to the very bottom of the tree. I will tie a rope round your body, so that I may be able to pull you up to the top again when you call."

"And what nave I to do down there at the bottom of the tree?" asked the soldier.

"To fetch money, to be sure! What else do you think!" continued the witch. "But you must know, that when you have got to the bottom of the oak, you will find

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yourself in a large hall, lighted by a hundred lamps. There you will see three doors, all of which you can open, for the key is in every one of them. If you enter the first door, you will come into a chamber, in the middle of which, on the floor, a great money-chest stands, but which is guarded by a dog with eyes as large as tea-cups; but that you need not mind. I will give you my colored apron; you must spread it out on the floor, and then you may boldly lay hold of the dog and put him on it; after which you can take out of the chest as many halfpence as you please: in that chest it is all copper. But if you want silver, you must go into the second chamber. However, here sits a dog upon the chest, with a pair of eyes as large as mill-wheels; but that you need not mind either: put the dog on the apron, and take as much silver as you please. But if you would rather have gold, you must go into the third chamber, and then you can take as much as you can carry. But the dog that guards this money-chest has eyes as large as

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the Round Tower* at Copenhagen. That's a dog for you who can see! But you need not mind him: put him on my apron, and take as many gold pieces out of the chest as you please; the dog won't do you any harm."

"That wouldn't be amiss!" said the soldier. "But what am I to give you, old beldame? For 'tis not very likely you would tell me this, and send me down the hollow tree to get so much treasure for nothing!"

"No, said the witch, "I don't ask a farthing! You must only bring up with you the tinder-box you will find, that my grandmother forgot the last time she was down there."

"Well, give me the rope," said the soldier, "I'll try!"

"Here it is," said the witch; "and here too is my colored apron." And she gave them both to him.

So the soldier climbed up to the top of the oak, put the rope about him, slipped

* The Observatory; so called on account of its round form.

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through the hole in the trunk, and stood suddenly in the great hall, which was lighted, exactly as the old witch had told him, by a hundred lamps.

As soon as he had looked round him a little, he found also the three doors, and immediately opened the first. There really sat the dog with eyes as large as tea-cups, and stared at him.

"Ho, ho, my dog!" said the soldier. "Good fellow!" And he spread the witch's apron on the floor, and set the dog upon it.

He now opened the money-chest, filled all his pockets with copper pennies and halfpence, shut down the lid again, put the staring dog on the top of it, and went, with his apron, into the second chamber. Good heavens! There sat the dog with eyes as big as mill-wheels.

"You should not look at me so fixedly," said he to the dog that was keeping watch; "that weakens the eyes!" Thereupon he set the animal on the apron; but when he saw the quantity of silver coin, he threw away the coppers and filled all his pockets

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and his knapsack with the bright silver. And then he went to the third door, and into the chamber.

Well, that was enough to disgust anybody! The dog here really had eyes as large as the Round Tower, and they rolled about in his head like turning-wheels.

"Good evening," said the soldier, putting his hand to his cap and saluting in true military style; for such a monster he had never met before. However, after he had looked at him for some moments, he thought it was enough; so he spread out the apron, lifted the enormous dog off the cover, and opened the money-chest.

What heaps of gold he saw! He could have bought all Copenhagen, all the sugar-plums, all the games of soldiers, all the whips and rocking-horses in Europe, with the money! At the first sight of such rich treasure, the soldier threw away all the silver with which he was laden, and stuffed his pockets, his knapsack, his cap, and his boots, so full of gold pieces, that he could but just move with the weight. Now, in-

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deed, he had money in abundance. The tremendous dog was put on the cover again, the door of the chamber shut, and the soldier went back to the hollow of the tree, and called out.

"Hallo, old hag! Now, then, pull me up again!"

"Have you got the tinder-box?" said the witch in reply.

"I'll be hanged, if I hadn't nearly forgotten it!" said the soldier. He then put the tinder-box in his pocket; the witch drew him up out of the tree; and he soon was standing again upon the highway with all his treasures.

"What do you want with the tinder-box?" asked the soldier.

"That's nothing to you," answered the old hag. "You've got money in plenty; so give me the tinder-box."

"No!" said the soldier. "Tell me directly what you'll do with the tinder-box, or I'll cut your head off with my sword!"

"No," cried the witch, "I won't."

And the soldier instantly drew his sword

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and chopped her head from her body; so there was an end of her! He then tied up his money in her apron, put the bundle over his shoulder and the tinder-box in his pocket, and walked on until he came to the next town.

It was a large city; and he went to the first hotel, asked for the best apartments, and ordered the most delicate things for dinner; for he was now a moneyed man.

The waiters, it is true, thought his boots rather strange-looking for so grand a gentleman; but they were of another opinion next morning, after he had been out shopping; for they now had the most elegant boots to clean, and the finest clothing to brush. The soldier had become quite a dandy; he talked of the curiosities of the town, and the sights to be seen, and the people told him about the King and his beautiful daughter the Princess.

"How can I see her?" asked the soldier impatiently.

"She is not to be seen at all," was the answer; "for she lives in a large brazen

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palace surrounded by many towers and high walls. Only the King visits his daughter; because it has been foretold that the Princess will marry a common soldier, and the King would never hear of such a thing."

"I'd give the world to see the Princess!" thought the soldier to himself; but as to getting a permission, it was of no use thinking of such a thing.

Meanwhile he led a merry life; went often to the play, drove about in the royal park, and gave a good deal to the poor. It was praiseworthy of him to be charitable; but he knew well enough by experience what a poor fellow feels who has not a penny in his pocket. He was, moreover, a rich man, had handsome clothes, and many friends, who told him every day that he was an excellent creature, a perfect gentleman; and all this the soldier liked to hear.

But it so happened after a while, as he was always taking from his money and never received any, he had at last but two-

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pence-halfpenny left. So he was obliged to leave the handsome lodgings he had lived in till now, and to take a small garret, to clean his own boots, and darn and mend his clothes himself when they wanted it. None of his old friends visited him any more; for they could not, of course, go up so many pair of stairs for his sake.

It was quite dark in his room, and he had not even money enough to buy a candle. Suddenly he remembered that, in the tinder-box which he fetched up from the bottom of the hollow oak, there were a few matches. He therefore took it, and began to strike a light; but as soon as the sparks flew about, the door of his room was thrown open, and the dog with eyes as large as a tea-cup walked in, and said, "What does the master please to command?"

"Well done!" cried the soldier, astonished; "that's a capital tinder-box, if I can get all I want with so little trouble! Well, then, my friend," said he to the dog with the staring eyes, "I am in want of money; get me some!"

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Crack! the dog had vanished, and crack! there he was again standing before the soldier, holding a purse filled with copper coin between his teeth.

Now the soldier perfectly understood how to employ the tinder-box: if he struck with the flint and steel once, then the dog with the copper money appeared; if twice, the one with the silver coin; and if three times, then came the dog that guarded the chest of gold.

After this discovery, he returned immediately to his former handsome lodgings; his numerous kind friends came to him again, and testified their sincere affection and attachment.

"Well," thought the soldier one day to himself, "'tis very strange that no one may see the beautiful Princess! They say she is a great beauty; but what good will that do her, if she is always to stay shut up in the brazen castle with the numerous towers! I wonder if it really be impossible to see her! Where's my tinder-box? I should like to know if it's only money that

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he can procure." He struck the flint, and the well-known dog with saucer-eyes stood before him.

"It is midnight, it is true," said he; "but I should like so much to see the Princess only for a moment!"

In a moment the dog was out of the room, and before the soldier thought it possible, he saw him return with the Princess, who sat asleep on the dog's back, and was so indescribably beautiful that anybody who saw her would know directly she was a Princess. The soldier could not help it; happen what might, he must give the Princess a kiss, and so he did, for he was, body and soul, a soldier.

Then the dog ran back again to the palace with the lovely Princess. The next morning at breakfast she told her parents of the curious dream she had had; that she had been riding on a dog, and that a soldier had given her a kiss.

"A very pretty affair indeed!" said the Queen. So now it was agreed that, next night, one of the ladies of the court should

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watch at the bedside of the Princess, in order to see into the matter of the dream, and if anything happened to her in her sleep.

That night again, the soldier felt a strange longing to see the beautiful Princess from the brazen castle. The dog was therefore despatched, who took her again on his back and ran off with her. But the cunning old lady quickly put on a pair of good walking-boots, and ran after the dog so fast, that she caught sight of him just as he was going into the house where the soldier lived.

"Ah, ah!" thought she; "all's right now! I know where he is gone to;" and she made a cross on the street door with a piece of chalk. Then she went back to the palace, and lay down to sleep. The dog, too, came back with the Princess; but when he remarked that there was a cross on the house where the soldier lived, he made crosses on all the street-doors in the town; which was very clever of the animal, for now the lady would not be able,

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with all her ingenuity, to find the right door again.

Early next morning came the King and Queen, the old lady, and all the high officers of the crown, to ascertain where the Princess had gone to in the night.

"Here's the house!" exclaimed the King, when he saw the first door that had a cross on it.

"No, it must be here, my dear," said the Queen, perceiving the next house with a white cross.

"Here, there, and every where are white crosses" cried all; for, look where they would, the street-doors had white crosses on them; and they now perceived it would be a vain attempt to try to find the right house.

The Queen, however, was an exceedingly clever woman. She knew something more than merely how to sit in a carriage with an air; and therefore she soon found out a way how to come on the traces of the dog. She took a whole piece of silk, cut it in two with a golden pair of scissors, and

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with the pieces made a bag. This bag she had filled with the most finely-sifted flour, and tied it with her own hands round the Princess's neck. When this was done, she took her golden scissors and cut a small hole in the bag, just large enough to let the flour run slowly out when the Princess moved.

The dog came again in the night, took the Princess on his back, and ran off with her to the soldier, who wanted so much only to look at her, and who would have given any thing to be a Prince, so that he might marry the Princess.

But the dog did not observe that his track from the palace to the soldier's house was marked with the flour that had run out of the bag. On the following morning the King and the Queen readily saw where their daughter had been during the night; and therefore they ordered the soldier to be arrested and put into prison.

There now sat the poor soldier in prison, and it was so dark too in his cell; besides, the jailor told him that he was to be hang-

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ed on the morrow. That was indeed no very pleasant news for the soldier, and more unfortunate than all, he had left his tinder-box at the hotel.

When day broke he could see out of his little prison-windows how the people were streaming from the town to see the execution; he heard the drums beat, and saw the soldiers marching to the spot where the scaffold was erected. Among the crowd was a little apprentice, who was in such a hurry that he lost one of his shoes just as he was running by the prison.

"Hallo, my little man!" cried the soldier to the boy; "you need not be in such a hurry; for nothing can be done till I come! If you will run to the inn, at the sign of the Golden Angel, and fetch me a tinder-box that I left behind in my room, I'll give you a groat for your trouble;—but you must make all the haste you can!"

The boy wanted very much to get the groat; so off he ran to the Golden Angel, found the tinder-box as described in the soldier's room, and brought it to him to his

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grated window. Now let us see what happened.

Outside the town a high gallows had been erected, which was surrounded by a quantity of soldiers, and thousands of people occupied the large field. The King and Queen sat on a splendid throne that had been erected for them, opposite the judges and the councillors.

The soldier was already on the highest step of the ladder, and the executioner was just about to put the rope round his neck, when he implored that they would grant him, poor sinner that he was, one last wish. He had, he said, a great longing to smoke a pipe of tobacco, and as this was the last act of grace he should ask for in this world, he hoped they would not be so cruel as to refuse him.

So the King allowed them to accede to his request: and the soldier took out his flint and steel, and struck one, two, three times; when presently all three enchanted dogs stood before him; the one with the saucer-eyes, as well as the other two with

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eyes like mill-wheels and the Round Tower at Copenhagen.

"Help me out of my difficulty!" called the soldier to the dogs. "Don't let them hang me!"

Thereupon the three frightful dogs fell on the judge and the councillors, seized one by the leg, another by the nose, and tossed them high up in the air, so that in tumbling down they were immediately dashed to pieces.

'We are not graciously pleased——" cried the King; but the dogs cared little for that, and took King and Queen, one after the other, and tossed them like the rest in the air.

Then the soldiers grew frightened, and the people called out, "Good soldier, you shall be our King, and you shall have the beautiful Princess for a wife!"

Then the soldier seated himself in the King's carriage, and all three dogs danced in front of it, and shouted "Hurrah!" The boys in the street whistled, and the soldiers presented arms.

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Now the Princess was liberated from the brazen castle, and was made Queen, which she liked very much. The wedding festivities lasted eight days, and the dogs seated themselves at table, and stared at every body with their great eyes.

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The Wicked King.

IN old times there lived a wicked, proud - hearted King, who never thought of anything but of conquering all the lands in the world, and making his name a terror to every one. He hurried about with fire and sword; his soldiers trampled down the corn in the fields, and burned the houses of the peasants, so that the red flame seemed to lick the leaves off

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the trees, and the fruit hung roasted from the black and scorched boughs. Many a poor mother hid herself, with her little naked baby, behind the smoking walls, and the soldiers searched for them till they found both herself and her child, and then began their cruel joy. Wicked spirits could not have done more shocking things than they did; but the king thought this was just as it should be.

Day by day his power increased; his name became a terror to every one, and fortune favored him in all that he did. He brought home large heaps of gold and treasure from the cities that he conquered; and in his own royal city such wealth was stored up as never was seen in any other place. Now he had splendid castles and palaces built; and every one who saw these glorious things said, "What a great king!" They never thought of the distress he had brought upon other countries; they never heard the sighs and groans that rose from the towns which he had laid in ashes.

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The Wicked King.

The king gazed on his gold, and on his gorgeous palaces; and then, like many other people, he thought, "What a great king am I! but I must have still more, much more. No power must be called equal to, and certainly none shall be greater than mine!"

So he began at once to make war upon all his neighbors, and he conquered them all. He had the vanquished princes fastened to his chariot by chains of gold when he drove through the streets; and when he sat at table, they had to lie at his feet, and at the feet of his courtiers, and pick up the crumbs that were thrown to them.

Now the king had his image set up in the public squares and royal palaces: yes, he even wanted it to stand in the churches before the altar of the Lord; but the priests said, "O King, thou art great, but God is greater: we dare not do this."

"Well, then," said the wicked king, "I will overcome Him also!"

And in the pride and folly of his heart, he had a beautiful ship built, which could sail

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through the air. It was as gay in color as the tail of the peacock, and seemed furnished with a thousand eyes; but every eye was the muzzle of a gun-barrel. The King sat in the middle of the ship; then he had only to press a spring, and thousands of balls would fly out, while the guns were found loaded again, just as they had been before. Hundreds of mighty eagles were harnessed to the ship: and so, now that all was ready, it rose in the air, and flew up towards the sun.

The earth soon lay far down below him. At first, with its mountains and its woods, it looked like a ploughed field, where the green blades of grass peep out from among the broken clods of turf; then it was like a smooth map of the world, and soon after this it was hidden in mist and cloud. Higher and higher flew the eagles.

But, behold, God sent a single one from His countless host of angels, and the king shot thousands of balls at him; but the hard balls rebounded like hail from the angel's shining wings. One drop of blood

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only, one single drop, came trickling from his snow-white plumes. This drop fell upon the ship in which the king was sitting: it burnt itself into it, and weighing down the vessel like a thousand fothers of lead, it bore it with awful violence towards the earth.

The strong wings of the eagles were broken; the wind whistled round the head of the king; and the clouds around him, which were made of the smoke of the burnt cities, took the threatening form of griffins, many miles long, that stretched out their strong claws at him; or now they looked like rolling rocks and dragons vomiting fire.

The king lay half dead at the bottom of the ship, which was caught, at last, in the thick branches of the forest.

"I will conquer heaven," said he. "I have sworn that I will, and it shall be done."

So for the next seven years he had ships cleverly built for sailing through the air; he had flashes of lightning forged from the

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hardest steel; for he was bent on riving the bulwarks of heaven. From all the countries he ruled over, large armies were levied, which covered a circuit of several miles when they were drawn up in order man by man.

They embarked in the ship she had so cunningly contrived, and he himself drew near to the one which he was to sail in. It was then that God sent a swarm of gnats against him,—one little swarm of gnats. They buzzed round the king, and stung him on his face and hands. He drew his sword in anger, but he only fought the empty air, for he could not touch the gnats. Therefore he ordered silken robes to be brought: he bade them wind these around him, that not a gnat should be able to reach him with its sting; and they did as he commanded.

But one little gnat lighted on the inside of the robes: it crept into the King's ear, and stung him there. The wound burned like fire; the poison rose to his brain. He tore off the silken coverings, and dashed them from him; then, rending his clothes,

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he danced naked and mad before the rude wild soldiers; while they, in their turn, jeered at the mad and wicked King, who had thought of fighting with God, and who yet had been overcome by one single little gnat.

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The

Resolute Leaden Soldier.

HERE were, once upon a time, five-and-twenty leaden soldiers, all brothers; for they had all been made out of an old metal spoon. They "carried arms," and stood there every one of them with their "eyes right." Their uniform was red and blue, and was quite beautiful. The very first thing they heard in this world when the cover was taken off the box, was, "Leaden Soldiers!" These words were

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uttered by a little boy who clapped his hands for joy; they had been given him because it was his birthday, and he now set them out upon the table. One soldier was exactly a counterpart of the other; a single one only was somewhat different from the rest—he had but one leg. He had been cast the last of all, and there was not lead enough left; yet he stood on his one leg quite as firmly as the others on two; and it is this very soldier whose fate is so remarkable.

On the table where they were set up many other playthings were lying; but what was most attractive to the eye was a pretty little castle of pasteboard. Through the little windows one could see right into the apartments. Before the castle little trees were standing round a little mirror which was meant for a lake; and swans, made of wax, swam about on it, and were reflected in the water. All was so nice and pretty; but the nicest of all was a little damsel that stood in the open entrance to the castle. She was cut out of paper, but

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she had on a dress of the finest gauze, and a narrow blue riband over her shoulders, and in the middle of this was a glittering spangle, which was just as large as her whole face.

The little lady stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer, and at the same time lifted one leg so high in the air that the leaden Soldier could not find it, and he might almost have fancied she had but one leg, like himself.

"She would make a good wife for me," thought he, "but she is rather a high personage. *She* lives in a castle; *I* have only a wooden-box, and there, too, are our five-and-twenty men: that's not a place for her! However, I will try to get acquainted with her."

And then he laid himself at full length behind a snuff-box that was standing on the table; whence he could have a perfect view of the little fine lady that stood on one leg without losing her balance.

As evening drew in, all the other soldiers came into their box, and the people in the

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house went to bed. Then the toys began to play, and amuse themselves,—they played at visiting, and at dancing the polka, and at war.

The soldiers in the box made a rattle; for they wanted to join the game, but the cover would not come off. The nutcrackers threw a sommerset, and the slate-pencil jumped about on the slate; it was such a sight that even the canary-bird awoke, and began to talk with the rest, and in verse, too, into the bargain.

The only two who did not move from their places were the leaden Soldier and the little Dancer; she remained in her graceful position on tip-toe with outstretched arms; and he stood just as firm on his one leg, and never took his eyes from off her even for a moment.

Now the clock struck twelve. Suddenly the cover of the snuff-box flew open; but there was no snuff in it. No, out sprung a little black Magician, for it was a conjuring-box.

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"Soldier!" cried the Magician, "will you keep your eyes to yourself?"

But the leaden Soldier pretended that he did not hear.

"Well! only wait! to-morrow!" said the magician.

When the morning was come, and the children were out of bed, the soldier was placed in the window, and,—whether the Magician did it, or the wind, that I don't know,—all at once the window flew open, and the Soldier fell down head over heels from the third story into the street. It was a frightful descent! He struck one leg into the air, and remained standing on his military cap, with his bayonet between the stones.

The maid and the little boy ran down directly to look for him; but, although they nearly trod on him, they could not see him. Had but the soldier cried out "Here I am!" they might have found him; but he did not deem it proper to call out loud because he was in uniform.

It now began to rain, one drop fell thicker

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than the other; till it came in a perfect torrent. When it was over two little boys came by.

"Look here!" said one. "Here is a leaden Soldier! Let us give him a sail in a boat!"

And they made a boat out of a newspaper, put the soldier in it, and now, there he was sailing along down the gutter. Both the little boys ran by the side clapping their hands.

Dear me! what waves were rolling in the gutter, and what a torrent it was! for the shower was a pretty smart one, I can tell you. The paper boat heaved and fell, and now and then made such turns that the leaden Soldier became quite giddy; but he was resolute, never changed countenance, kept his "eyes right," and "carried arms" as before. All at once the boat was driven into a long covered drain; it was as dark to the Soldier as if he were in his own wooden box.

"Where am I going to now!" thought he. "Yes, yes, this is the Magician's

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doings! Oh, were the little maiden with me in the boat, darkness and all else were indifferent to me!"

At the same moment a large water-rat, that lived in the drain, made his appearance.

"Where's your passport?" asked the rat; "out with your passport!"

But the soldier was silent, and held his musket the tighter. The boat drove onward, the rat pursuing. How horribly he gnashed his teeth, and how dreadful it was to hear him cry out to the straws and floating bits of wood:

"Stop him! stop him! he has defrauded the customs! He has not shown his passport!"

But the stream grew stronger and stronger. Already could the soldiers see the light of day before he got to the end of the drain, but he heard, too, a roaring sound, at which the bravest heart would have quaked. Only imagine! at the spot where the drain ended, the water of the gutter was precipitated headlong into a great canal: for the

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Soldier, that was as dangerous as descending a mighty cataract.

He was already so near that to stop was impossible; the boat shot forward; the poor leaden Soldier stood as upright as he could, for no one could say of him that he had even winked his eyes. The boat whirled round three, four times, and was filled with water up to the very edge. Sink it must. The soldier was up to his neck in water: deeper and deeper sank the boat, and looser and looser became the paper. At last the water went over the Soldier's head; he thought of the pretty little Dancer that he was never to see again, and the words of the song,

> O warrior! dangers must thou brave,
> And death must be thy portion,

sounded in his ears. Then the paper fell to pieces, the leaden Soldier tumbled out—but at that very moment a large fish swallowed him.

Well to be sure, how dark it was! It was darker here than in the drain; and,

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besides, there was so little room. But the leaden Soldier was resolute; there he lay at full length, and still "carried arms."

The fish darted hither and thither; he moved about in the most terrible manner, and at last he was quite still. Something like a ray of light darted through him; all was bright and clear, and a voice cried, "The leaden Soldier!" The fish had been caught, taken to market, bought, and sent into the kitchen, where the cook cut it open with a large knife. She took the Soldier by the waist with her finger and thumb, and carried him up stairs, where everybody was eager to see the remarkable man that had made a journey in the inside of a fish. But the Soldier was not proud. They put him on the table, and—no! how wondrously things fall out in this world!—he was in the very same room where he had been before; he saw the same children; the same toys were upon the table—the beautiful castle with the pretty little Dancer standing at the door—all were the same! She stood upon one leg still, and held the other high

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in the air: she, too, was resolute. The leaden Soldier was quite affected at the thought, and he could have wept tears of lead, but that it did not become him to do so. He gazed at her, and she gazed on him; but they spoke not a word.

At that moment one of the little boys took up the Soldier, flung him without more ado into the fire! He gave no reason for doing so; but it was, doubtless, the work of the Magician in the snuff-box.

There stood the Soldier in a blaze of light. He felt a terrible glow; but whether it arose from the fire or from love, he knew not. He had completely changed color; however, I am unable to say whether that happened on account of his long journey, or was the consequence of his agitation. He looked at the little damsel, she looked at him, and he felt that he was melting; but there he stood, still resolute, and "carried arms."

Suddenly a door opened, the wind caught the Dancer, and, like a sylphide, she flew

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straight into the fire to the leaden Soldier, blazed up, and—she was gone!

The Soldier melted together in a lump, and the next morning, when the maid came to take away the ashes, she found his remains in the form of a little leaden heart. Of the Dancer, however, nothing but the spangle remained, and that was burnt as black as a coal.

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The Garden of Paradise.

OULD you like to hear about the Garden of Paradise? Well then, I will tell you that once upon a time there lived the son of a King; nobody ever had so many and such beautiful books as he; and in them he could read of all the events that had ever happened in the world, and see them represented in magnificent pictures. From

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them he could get information about every country and every people: but of where the Garden of Paradise was to be found, not a word was said; and that was the very thing he thought most of and most wished to know.

While the Prince was still quite a little boy, and just when he ought to have been sent to school, his grandmother told him that every flower in the Garden of Paradise was made of the sweetest cake, and its stamina of the choicest wine: on one plant grew history, on another geography, on a third the German language; so that one only need eat the cakes in order to know one's lesson perfectly; and the more one ate the more one learned, and the more one understood of history, geography, or German.

At that time the young Prince believed all this; but by degrees, as he grew older and wiser, he saw very well that the glory of the Garden of Paradise must be a very different sort of thing.

"Oh, why did Eve pluck the fruit from

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the tree of knowledge? Why did Adam eat of what was forbidden? *I* ought to have been there, and then it would not have happened! Never should sin have entered into the world!"

So spoke he then; and so he spoke still, when he was seventeen years old. The Garden of Paradise occupied all his thoughts.

One day he strolled into the forest. He was alone; for to be so was his greatest pleasure.

The evening was closing in, the clouds were gathering, and it began to rain as if the whole heavens were one great floodgate from which the water was bursting. It was, too, as dark as it could be at night in the deepest well. Now he slipped on the wet grass, now he stumbled over bare stones which were scattered over the rocky ground.

He was, besides, dripping wet: the poor Prince had not a dry thread on his body. He was forced to climb over huge blocks of stone, where the water trickled down from

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the high moss. He was near falling from fatigue, when he heard a strange humming noise; and before him he saw a large illumined cavern. In the middle of it burned a fire, at which a buck might have been roasted whole. And it was the case too;—a very fine buck, with zig-zag antlers, was stuck on the spit, and turned slowly between two enormous pine-trees. An elderly woman, tall and strong, as though she were a man in disguise, sat by the fire, and threw in one piece of wood after another.

"Come, come nearer," said she, seeing the Prince; "seat yourself by the fire, and dry your clothes."

"There's a terrible draught here," said the Prince, and he sat down on the floor of the cave.

"That will be still worse when my sons come home," said the woman. "You are in the Cavern of the Winds; my sons are the Four Winds of the world. Do you understand me?"

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"Where are your sons?" asked the Prince.

"Stupid questions are not easily answered," said the woman. "My sons live just as they please; they play at ball with the clouds up there," and so saying she pointed to the sky above.

"Oh, indeed!" said the Prince, "as to yourself, you speak rather roughly, and are altogether not so gentle as the women that I generally see around me."

"Yes; they, I suppose, have nothing else to do. I must be harsh, if I am to keep my boys in order: but I can do it, though they have stiff necks of their own! Do you see those four sacks yonder by the wall? they stand as much in awe of them as you once did of the rod on the shelf. I bang them together, let me tell you, and then off they march into the sack; we don't stand on much ceremony here,—there they sit, nor do they come out till I choose to let them. But see, here is one of them!"

With that in came the North Wind. He entered with an icy coldness; large hail-

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stones danced upon the ground and flakes of snow flew about him. He had on a jacket and trowsers of bear-skin; a seal-skin cap hung over his ears; long icicles were hanging at his beard, and one hailstone after the other slipped out from under his jacket-collar.

"But don't go to the fire directly!" said the Prince. "Your face and hands might get frostbitten!"

"Frostbitten!" said the North Wind, laughing loudly; "Frostbitten! why that is just my greatest delight! But pray who are you, Mr. Spindleshanks? How came you into the Cavern of the Winds?"

"He is my guest," said the old woman; "and if you are not satisfied with the explanation, you shall be off to the sack. So now you know my mind."

This had the desired effect; and the North Wind sat down and related whence he came, and where he had been the whole month.

"I came from the Arctic Ocean: I have been on Bear Island," said he, with the

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Russian whale-fishers. I sat and slept at the helm as they sailed past the North Cape. When I now and then awoke up a little, the stormy-petrel flew about my legs; it is a strange bird! he gives a quick stroke with his wings, and then keeps them stretched out immoveably, and needs no further exertion."

"Do not make your story so long," said the Mother of the Winds. "And so you came to Bear Island?"

"'Tis splendid there! The ground is like a floor just fit for dancing, as flat as a board! Half-thawed snow and moss, sharp stones, and the skeletons of whales and polar bears lay about, and they looked exactly like the legs and arms of giants covered over with a mouldy green. One would think the sun never shone upon them. I blew aside the mist a little, that I might see the hut. That was a fine house! It was built of the remains of a wreck, and covered with the skin of a whale; the fleshy side outwards, all green and red; and on the roof there sat a live polar bear,

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and growled. I went along the shore, looked into the birds' nests, and saw the callow young ones screaming and chirping with open mouths; so I blew into their throats by thousands, and then they learned to shut their mouths. Beneath me the walruses tumbled about, looking like gigantic worms with heads of swine and tusks an ell long."

"You tell your story well, my son," exclaimed the mother; "it makes one freeze to listen to you."

"Now, then, the fishing began; the harpoon was thrust into the breast of the walrus, and the reeking stream of blood spouted like a fountain over the ice. Then I thought of my part of the sport. I gave a blast, and made my ships, the stupendous icebergs, hem in the boats. Ha, ha! how the crew all whistled and shouted, but I whistled louder! The pieces of the dead whales, chests, and tackle—all were obliged to be unpacked upon the ice. I shook snow-flakes about them, and sent them and their boat, locked up in the ice, drifting to

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the southward, to get a taste of salt-water. They won't make their appearance at Bear Island again!"

"You have been doing mischief, then!" said the Mother of the Winds.

"The good I have done others may relate," said he; "but here comes my brother from the West; I love him best of all—he smells so of the sea, and he has such a healthy cold about him."

"Is that delicate little Zephyr?" asked the Prince.

"Yes, to be sure it is," said the old woman; "but he is no longer so very delicate either. Once upon a time he was a nice, mild little fellow, but that's all over now."

The West Wind looked like a wild man, but on his head he had a sort of padded covering, to save him from hurt. In his hand he held a club of mahogany, hewn in the American forests. Nothing less than this would have done.

"Where do you come from?" inquired his old mother.

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"From the forest wilderness," said he, "where the thorny lianas form a hedge between every tree, where the water-snakes lie in the wet grass, and where man seems to be useless."

"What did you do there?"

"I looked into the deep river, saw how it rolled from the rocks, and dashed into spray, flew up towards the clouds, and gave form to the rainbow. I saw a buffalo swimming in the stream, but the current bore him down: he drifted onwards with a flock of wild-fowls; they flew away when the water swept over the precipice, but the buffalo was forced to plunge over with it. That pleased me, and I blew such a hurricane that the primeval trees were hurled cracking to the earth, and were crashed to atoms."

"And have you done nothing else?" asked the old woman.

"I have tumbled head over heels in the Savannahs, I have chased the wild horses, and rattled down the cocoa-nuts. Yes, yes; I have enough to tell about. But one

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must not tell all one knows; that you know very well, old mammy." And so saying, he kissed his mother to such a degree that she nearly tumbled down. He was a wild fellow, that West Wind!

Now came in the South Wind; he had a turban on his head and a flying Bedouin mantle.

"It's cold enough here," said he, throwing wood upon the fire; "one can very well feel that the North Wind was here before me."

"It's so hot here that one might roast a polar bear," said the North Wind.

"You are a polar bear yourself," said the South Wind.

"Do you want to be put in the sack?" asked the old woman. "Sit down there on the stone, and tell where you have been, and what you have done."

"In Africa, mother," answered he. "I have been lion-hunting with the Hottentots in the land of the Caffres. What fine grass grows there in the plains, as green as the olive! There frisked the gnu, and the

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ostrich ran races with me; but I am swifter than he. I came to the desert, to the yellow sand: it looks like the bottom of the sea. I met a caravan; they killed their last camel to get water to drink, but they did not get much. From above they were scorched by the sun, from below they were burned by the sand. The vast desert was endless. There I rolled myself in the fine loose sand, and in great pillars whirled it up into the air. Oh, it was a glorious dance! You should have seen how stupified the dromedary stood, and how the merchant drew his caften over his head! He threw himself down before me, as before Allah, his God. Now they are all buried, but a pyramid of sand stands above them. When some day or other I blow it away, the sun will bleach the white bones, and travellers may see that men have been there before them. But for this no one would believe it in the desert."

"So, then, you have done nothing but evil," said his mother. "March! to the sack!" And before he was aware of it, she

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had seized hold of the South Wind by the body, and—into the sack with him. The bag with him in it kicked and rolled about the floor; but she seized it, held it fast and sat down on it, and then he was forced to lie still.

"They are desperately wild fellows, these sons of yours!" said the Prince.

"Yes, indeed they are," answered she; "but they must obey for all that. Ha! here we have the fourth."

This was the East Wind, who was dressed like a Chinese.

"What! are you come from that corner of the world?" said his mother. "I thought you had been to the Garden of Paradise?"

"I am going there to-morrow," said the East Wind; "to-morrow it will be a hundred years since I was there. I come from China now, where I danced round the porcelain tower till I set all the bells a-tinkling. Below in the street the officers of state got such a beating that the bamboo-canes split across their shoulders; and these were personages from the first to the ninth degree.

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They called out, 'Thanks, thanks, paternal benefactor!' but they didn't mean it; and I tinkled the bells all the while, and sang, 'Tsing, tsang, tsu!'"

"You are a harum-scarum youth," said the old woman. "It is a good thing you are going to the Garden of Paradise to-morrow; your education requires it, and your visit there always contributes to your improvement. Do but drink deep of the fountain of wisdom, and bring a little bottle-ful for me."

"I will," said the East Wind; "but why have you put my brother from the south into the sack? Let him out; he must tell me about the phœnix; about this bird the Princess in the Garden of Paradise wants always to hear something, when I go to pay my visit every hundred years. Open the sack; you are my own sweet dear little mother; and I'll give you two pocketsful of tea, quite fresh and green, just as I picked it myself on the spot."

"Well, then, for the sake of the tea, and

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because, after all, you are my darling, I'll open the sack."

And she did so, and the South Wind crept out; but he looked very crest-fallen, because the Prince, who was a stranger, had seen the whole affair.

"Here is a palm-leaf for the Princess," said the South Wind; "it was given me by the old phœnix-bird—the only one that was in the whole world. On it he has scribbled with his bill his whole history during the hundred years that he lived; so now she can read it herself. I saw how the phœnix set fire to his own nest, seated himself on it, and was burnt like the Hindoo widow. How the green boughs crackled, and what a smoke and fragrance from the burning nest! At length all was in flames; the old bird was turned to ashes, but his egg lay red and glowing in the fire. It burst with a loud noise, and the young phœnix flew out. He is now lord over all the birds, and the only phœnix in the world. He has bitten a hole in that leaf I have given you; that is his greeting to the Princess."

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"Let us now take something to refresh ourselves," said the mother of the winds; and they all sat down to eat of the roasted buck; and the Prince took a place next to the East Wind, and for that reason they very soon became very good friends.

"I say," began the Prince, "just tell me what Princess that is of whom you have talked so much? and where does the Garden of Paradise lie?"

"Ho, Ho!" said the East Wind; "will you go there? If you will, set off to-morrow with me; but this much must I tell you, no human being was ever there since Adam and Eve's time. You know them, of course, from the Bible history?"

"Yes, to be sure," said the Prince.

"When they were driven away, the Garden of Paradise sank into the earth; but it retained its warm sunshine, its genial air, and all its glory. The Queen of the Fairies lives there; there lies the Island of Bliss, which Death can never reach, and where life is so very beautiful. Seat yourself to-morrow on my back, and I will take you

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with me; I think we shall be able to manage it. But now hold your tongue, for I want to go to rest."

And now they all fell asleep.

Early in the morning the Prince awoke, and was not a little astonished to see that he was already far above the clouds. He was sitting on the back of the East Wind, who carefully held him fast; they were so high in the air that woods and fields, rivers and lakes, looked like a large colored map, stretched out below.

"Good morning," said the East Wind; "you may, if you like, sleep a little longer; for as yet there is not much to be seen on the flat land beneath us, unless you would like to count the churches, which stand like little white dots down there on the green board." They were the fields and meadows which he called a green board.

"It was unpolite of me to depart without taking leave of your mother and brothers," said the Prince.

"If one sleeps, it is excusable," answered the East Wind; and now they flew on still

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more quickly. One could hear it by the tops of the trees; when they passed over them, all the leaves and the branches rustled: one could hear it on the sea, and on the lakes; for wherever they flew, the waves rose higher, and the tall ships bent low down to the water like swans.

Towards evening, as it was getting dark, the great cities appeared very strange. Lights were burning below, now here, now there; and it looked exactly as if one had burned a piece of paper, and shaken the sparks in all directions; and then to see them vanish one after another, till at last, as children say, out goes the sexton and his family.

The Prince clapped his hands; but the East Wind begged him to be quiet, and to hold fast; otherwise it was not unlikely he might fall down, and be left hanging to some church-steeple.

The eagle in the dark forests flew quickly enough; but the East Wind flew more quickly. The Cossack on his little horse rode at full speed over the steppes; but the

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Prince rode along more rapidly in a very different manner.

"Now you can see the Himalaya," said the East Wind, "they are the highest mountains in Asia: we shall soon be at the Garden of Paradise."

They afterwards turned more to the south; and the fragrance of spices and flowers soon floated through the air. Figs and pomegranates grew wild, and red and white grapes hung in profusion on the wild vine. Here they both descended, and lay in the soft grass, where the flowers nodded to the wind, as though they would say, "Welcome, welcome!"

"Are we now in the Garden of Paradise?" asked the Prince.

"No, not yet," said the East Wind; "but we shall soon be there. Do you see yon wall of rock, and the great cavern, where the tendrils of the vine-leaves hang like rich green curtains? There we must pass. Wrap yourself up in your cloak: here the sun is burning; but a step further and it is icy cold. The bird that flies before the

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cavern has one wing out here in the warm summer, and the other within in the cold winter."

"And that is the way to the Garden of Paradise?" asked the Prince.

So now they entered the cavern: oh, how icy cold it was! but it did not last long. The East Wind spread out his wings, and they shone like a glowing fire. But what a cavern! The huge blocks of stone, from which the water trickled, hung over them in the most extraordinary shapes. Sometimes the passage was so narrow that they were obliged to creep along on hands and feet; and again it was as broad and high as under the open heaven. It looked like a subterranean chapel, with silent organ-pipes and petrified organ.

"Suely we are going by the path of Death into the Garden of Paradise, are we not?" said the Prince. But the East Wind answered not a word: he only pointed forwards, where the loveliest blue light gleamed towards them. The blocks of stone above their heads became more and

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like a vapor, and at last were as clear ite cloud in the moonlight. They w in the mildest air, as refreshing the mountains, and as fragrant as ong the roses of the valley.

Here flowed a river as transparent as the air itself; and the fish that were in it were of silver and gold; purple-colored eels, that at every turn sent forth a shower of blue sparks, sported in the water; and the broad leaves of the water-lily displayed every color of the rainbow—the flower itself was a pale-yellow burning flame, which was sustained by the water, as the lamp is fed by the oil. A firm bridge of marble, but so fine and so curiously wrought as though it were made of glass beads and lace, led over the water to the Island of Bliss, where bloomed the Garden of Paradise.

The East Wind took the Prince in his arms and carried him across. Then the leaves and the flowers sang the most beautiful songs about his childhood; but in such sweet and swelling tones, that no human voice could imitate them.

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Whether they were palms or gigantic water-plants that grew here, the Prince knew not; but such great luxurious trees he had never before seen; and there in long garlands were hanging from tree to tree the most curious creepers, just as one sees them in rich colors and gold on the margin of old Prayer-books, or twining round the initial letters. There was the most beautiful mixture of birds, and wreaths, and flowers. Close by in the grass, stood a flock of peacocks, with their radiant tails outspread. Yes, indeed it was so—but no, when the Prince touched them, he found that they were not birds, but plants. They were large burs, which here shone like the magnificent tail of the peacock. Lions and tigers leaped like playful cats between the green hedges, that smelt as sweetly as the blossom of the olive; and the lions and the tigers were tame. The timid wood-dove, her plumage shining like the fairest pearl, fanned the lion's mane with her wings; and the antelope, usually so shy, stood and

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nodded its head, as though it would like to play with the rest.

Now came the Fairy of Paradise. Her clothes shone like the sun; and her countenance was as mild as that of a happy mother when she rejoices over her child. She was young and beautiful; and following her were the loveliest maidens, each one with a gleaming star in her hair.

The East Wind gave her the leaf with the writing from the phœnix, and her eyes beamed with joy. She took the Prince by the hand, and led him into her palace, where the walls were colored like the leaf of the most beautiful tulip when held up to the sun. The ceiling was a single shining flower; and the more one looked into the calix, the deeper it seemed. The Prince advanced to the window, and looked through one of the panes: he saw there the Tree of Knowledge, with the Serpent; and Adam and Eve standing close beside it.

"Were they not driven away?" asked he. And the Fairy smiled, and explained to him that on every pane of glass Time had

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burnt its image; but it was not such a picture as one generally sees: no, there was life in it; the leaves of the trees moved, and human beings went and came as in a mirror. And he looked through another pane; there was Jacob's dream. The ladder went straight up into heaven, and the angels with their broad wings ascended and descended upon it. Yea, all that had happened in this world lived and moved on the window-panes; but such beautiful glass-painting as this could only be produced by Time.

The Fairy smiled, and led the Prince into a high, and spacious hall, whose walls seemed transparent, and were covered with paintings: there were thousands of happy beings, whose faces were radiant with beauty, and who laughed and sang so that their voices formed a wondrous harmony. The highest were so very small; smaller than the least rose-bud, when it is drawn like a mere dot upon the paper.

In the midst of the hall stood a large tree, with luxuriant pendent branches; and

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golden apples, large and small, hung like oranges between the green leaves. This was the Tree of Knowledge, of whose fruit Adam and Eve had eaten. From every leaf a red gleaming dew-drop was falling: it was as if the tree shed tears of blood.

"Now let us get into the boat," said the Fairy; "we will refresh ourselves on the heaving water. The boat rocks on the swelling waves, yet it moves not from the spot; but all the countries of the earth will glide by before our eyes."

And it was wonderful to behold how the whole coast moved. There came the lofty snow-covered Alps, with clouds and dark pines: the deep melancholy sound of the horn was heard; and herdsmen shouted merrily from the valley below.

Now the long drooping branches of the Bananas hung down into the boat, jet black swans swam on the water, and the strangest looking animals and flowers were to be seen on the banks. This was New Holland, and the fifth quarter of the Globe, that glided by with a view of the Blue Mountains. And

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now came the songs of the priests, and they saw the wild inhabitants dance to the sound of the drum and of the bone tuba. Egypt's pyramids climbing to the clouds, overthrown columns, and sphynxes, half buried in sand, sailed by. The aurora borealis burned over the mountains of the north: that was a fire-work that no mortal could imitate. The Prince was so happy, and he saw a hundred times more than is related here!

"And may I always stay here?" asked he.

"That depends on yourself," answered the Fairy. "If you do not allow yourself to be seduced, like Adam, to do that which is forbidden, you may stay here for ever."

"I will not touch the apple of the Tree of Knowledge," said the Prince. "Here are a thousand fruits as beautiful as that one. I should never do as Adam did!"

"Examine yourself, and if you are not strong enough, then go with the East Wind that brought you: he is about to fly back, and will not come again for a hundred years. To you the time here will pass

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away as though it were a hundred hours; but it is a long time for temptation and sin. Every evening, when I leave you, I must call, 'Come with me!' I must beckon to you with my hand—but do not attend. Do not follow me; for with every step temptation will increase. Should you come into the hall where the Tree of Knowledge stands, under whose fragrant boughs I sleep, and bend over me, and press a kiss on my mouth, then will Paradise sink into the earth, and be lost to you. The chill winds of the desert will whistle around you, the cold rain trickle from your hair, and want and sorrow will be your portion."

"I will remain," said the Prince; and the East Wind kissed him on the forehead, and said, "Be firm, and we shall meet again here in a hundred years! Farewell, farewell!"

And the East Wind spread out his large wings: they shone like lightning seen at harvest-time; or like the aurora borealis in cold winter.

"Farewell! farewell!" was re-echoed by

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tree and flower. The storks and the pelicans flew in long rows like fluttering streamers as they accompanied him to the boundary of the garden.

"Now we begin our dances!" said the Fairy. "At the conclusion, when I have danced with you, you will see how, as the sinking sun departs, I shall beckon to you. You will hear me call, 'Come, oh come with me!' but do not follow me. That is your temptation—that is sin to you. For a hundred years must I repeat the call to you every evening. With each evening that you resist the temptation will your moral strength increase, till at last you will not give it a thought. This evening will be the first trial—remember I have given you warning!"

And the Fairy led him to a large hall of white transparent lilies; and the yellow stamina of the lilies were little golden harps, which gave forth a music as of stringed instruments and flutes.

Lovely maidens, light and slender, danced gracefully around him, and sang of life and

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its delights; and the burden of their song was, that death should never approach those who were purified by trial, and that the Garden of Paradise should bloom to them for ever.

It was sunset: the whole sky was as pure gold; and in the purple light the lilies shone like the most beautiful roses. And the Prince felt a joy within his heart which he had never experienced before. He saw how the background of the hall opened, and beheld the Tree of Knowledge standing amidst dazzling brightness.

And again the sound of song was wafted towards him, mild and gentle as his mother's voice; and he seemed to hear her sing, "My child, my dear, dear child!"

Then the Fairy beckoned with tenderness, and cried, "Come, oh come with me!"

He rushed towards her; forgot his vow, forgot it even on the very first evening; and again she beckoned and smiled.

The air, the spicy air around grew still more balmy; and the harps sounded more deliciously; and it seemed as if the millions

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of laughing faces in the hall, where the tree grew, nodded and said, "One should know all! Man is Lord of the Earth." And it was no longer tears of blood that dropped from the leaves of the Tree of Knowledge, but red, shining stars; such, at least, did they seem to him.

"Come, oh come with me!" sounded with trembling tones; and at every step the cheeks of the Prince burned more ardently, and more quickly flowed his blood.

"I must," said he; "it surely is no sin; cannot possibly be a sin! Why not pursue what is beautiful and joyous? I will see her while she sleeps. In doing that I shall have lost nothing: but if I were to kiss her, —but kiss her I will not—I am strong, and am resolute!"

And the Fairy threw off her shining mantle, bent aside the branches, and was hidden in a moment from his sight.

"As yet I have not sinned," said the Prince; "nor will I;" and he pushed aside the green, depending branches of the Tree of Knowledge; she slept—as beautiful as

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only the Fairy of the Garden of Paradise can be. She smiled in her dream; he bent over her, and saw tears beneath her eyelashes.

"Dost thou weep for me?" he murmured: "oh, weep not, beautiful maiden!—Now, for the first time, do I comprehend the joy of Paradise! I feel it in every vein: every thought is possessed by it. I feel the cherub's strength, and everlasting life in my mortal body; let darkness enwrap me for ever—one moment like this is enough!" And he kissed the tears from her eyes; his lips touched hers—a frightful clap of thunder was heard, so loud and terrible that none has ever heard the like. And all disappeared: the charming Fairy and the blooming Paradise sunk deep into the earth; down into dark night the Prince saw it sinking; and like a small twinkling star it shone in the far distance. An icy coldness spread over his limbs; he closed his eyes, and lay for a long while as if dead.

The cold rain fell on his face, the chill

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wind blew on his forehead, and at last his senses returned.

"What have I done?" said he; "I have sinned like Adam; I have sinned, and Paradise has sunk from my sight!"

He opened his eyes; the distant star, the star that twinkled like the sunken Paradise, he could see still: it was the Morning-star shining in the sky.

He rose and found himself in the great wood, near the Cave of the Winds. The Mother of the Winds sat by his side; she looked displeased, and lifted her arm on high.

"Already, the first evening!" said she; "I thought as much; yes, if you were my son, by my faith, I would punish you. you should march into the sack."

"In he shall go; punishment will come!" said a strong old man with a scythe in his hand, and with large black wings! "He shall be laid in the coffin, but not now; I have marked him, but I will leave him yet a little while to wander on the earth, to repent his sins; he may improve, he may

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grow good. Some day I shall come again. When he least expects it, I shall push him into the black coffin. I shall put it on my head, and shall fly towards the stars. There, too, blooms the Garden of Paradise. If he be good and holy, he may enter its beautiful pearl gates and be a dweller in it for ever and ever: but should his head and heart be still full of sin, then he will sink with the coffin deeper than ever sank the Garden of Paradise; and every thousand years only shall I come to fetch him, that he may either sink still deeper, or dwell in the star—in that bright sparkling star there yonder!"

The Prince arose—the old woman was gone—the Cave of the Winds was nothing now but a hollow in the rock; he wondered how it had seemed so large the night before; the morning star had set, and the sun shone with a clear and cheerful light upon the little flowers and blades of grass, which were heavy with the last night's rain; the birds sang, and the bees hummed in the blossoms of the lime tree.

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The Prince walked home to his castle. He told his grandmother how he had been to the Garden of Paradise, and what had happened to him there, and what the old man with the black wings had said.

"This will do you more good than many book-lessons," said his grandmother; "never let it go out of thy memory!"

And the Prince never did forget it.

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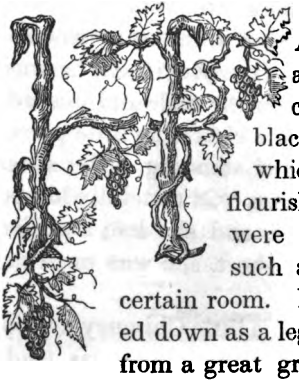
The Shepherdess and Chimney-Sweep.



HAVE you ever seen a very, very old clothespress, quite black with age, on which all sorts of flourishes and foliage were carved? Just such a one stood in a certain room. It had been handed down as a legacy to the owner from a great great grandmother, and it was carved from top to bottom with roses and tulips; the most curious flourishes

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were to be seen on it, and between them little stags popped out their heads with zig-zag antlers.

But on the top a man at full length was carved. True he was laughable to look at; for he showed his teeth—laughing one could not call it—had goat's legs, little horns on his head, and a long beard. The children in the room always called him General-clothes-press-inspector-head-superintendent Goat-legs, for this was a name difficult to pronounce, and there are very few who get the title: but to cut him out in wood—that was no trifle. However, there he was. He looked down upon the table and towards the mirror, for there a charming little porcelain Shepherdess was standing. Her shoes were gilded, her gown was tastefully looped up with a red rose, and she had a golden hat and cloak; in short, she was most exquisite.

Close by her stood a little Chimney-sweep, as black as a coal, although he was made of porcelain too. He was just as clean and pretty as the rest of them; as to his being a

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chimney-sweep, that was only what he represented; and the porcelain manufacturer could just as well have made a prince of him as a chimney-sweep, if he had chosen; one was as easy as the other, to a clever workman.

There he stood so prettily with his ladder,* and with a little round face as fair and as rosy as that of the Shepherdess. In reality this was a fault; for a little black he certainly ought to have been. He was quite close to the Shepherdess; both stood where they had been placed; and as soon as they were put there, they had mutually promised each other eternal fidelity; for they suited each other exactly—they were young, they were of the same porcelain, and both equally fragile.

Close to them stood another figure three

* The flues in Germany are much larger than in the houses in England; so much so indeed, that men only are employed as sweeps. The lower part being very wide, they have short ladders of about eight feet in length to enable them to get up to the narrower part, where they then scramble on in the usual way.—C. B.

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times as large as they were. It was an o d Chinese, that could nod his head. He was made of porcelain too, and said that he was grandfather of the little Shepherdess; but this he could not prove. He asserted, moreover, that he had authority over her, and that was the reason he had nodded his assent to the General-clothes-press-inspector-head-superintendent-Goat-legs, who paid his addresses to the Shepherdess.

"In him," said the old Chinese, "you will have a husband who, I verily believe, is of mahogany. You will be Mrs. Goat-legs, the wife of a General-clothes-press-inspector-head-superintendent, who has his shelves full of plate, besides what is hidden in secret drawers and recesses."

"I will not go into the dark cupboard," said the little Shepherdess; "I have heard say that he has eleven wives of porcelain in there already."

"Then you may be the twelfth," said the Chinese. "To-night, as soon as the old clothes-press cracks, as sure as I am a

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Chinese, we will keep the wedding. And then he nodded his head, and fell asleep.

But the little Shepherdess wept, and looked at her beloved—at the porcelain Chimney-sweep.

"I implore you," said she, "fly hence with me into the wide world: for here it is impossible for us to remain."

"I will do all you ask," said the little Chimney-sweep. "Let us instantly leave this place. I think my trade will enable me to support you."

"If we were only down from the table," said she. "I shall not be happy till we are far from here, and free."

He consoled her, and showed her how she was to set her little foot on the carved border and on the gilded foliage which twined around the leg of the table, brought his ladder to her assistance, and at last both were on the floor; but when they looked towards the old clothes-press, they observed a great stir. All the carved stags stretched their heads out farther, raised their antlers, and turned round their heads. The Gen-

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eral-clothes-press-inspector-head-superintendent gave a jump, and called to the old Chinese, "They are running away! they are running away!"

At this she grew a little frightened, and jumped quickly over the ridge into a low drawer near the window.

Here lay three or four packs of cards, which were not complete, and a little puppet-show, which was set up as well as it was possible to do. A play was being performed, and all the ladies, Diamonds as well as Hearts, Clubs and Spades, sat in the front row, and fanned themselves with the tulips they held in their hands, while behind them stood all the knaves ready to wait upon them when they wanted anything. The play was about two persons who could not have each other as they wished, at which the Shepherdess wept, for it was her own history.

"I cannot bear it any longer," said she; "I must get out of the drawer."

But when she had got down on the floor, and looked up to the table, she saw that

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the old Chinese was awake, and that his whole body was rocking.

"The old Chinese is coming!" cried the little Shepherdess; and down she fell on her porcelain knee, so frightened was she.

"A thought has struck me," said the Chimney-sweep; "let us creep into the great Pot-pourri Jar that stands in the corner; there we can lie on roses and lavender, and if he comes after us, throw dust in his eyes."

"'Tis of no use," said she. "Besides, I know that the old Chinese and the Pot-pourri Jar were once betrothed; and when one has been once on such terms, a little regard always lingers behind. No; for us there is nothing left but to wander forth into the wide world."

"Have you really courage to go forth with me into the wide world?" asked the Chimney-sweep tenderly. "Have you considered how large it is, and that we can never come back here again?"

"I have thought of all that," said she.

And the Sweep gazed fixedly upon her,

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and then said, "My way lies up the chimney. Have you really courage to go with me through the stove, and to creep through all the flues? We shall then get into the main flue, after which I am not at a loss what to do. Up we mount, then, so high that they can never reach us; and at the top is an opening that leads out into the world."

And he led her towards the door of the stove.

"It looks quite black," said she; but still she went with him, and on through all the intricacies of the interior, and through the flues, where a pitchy darkness reigned.

"We are now in the chimney," said he; "and behold, behold, above us is shining the loveliest star!"

It was a real star in the sky that shone straight down upon them, as if to show the way. They climbed and they crept higher and higher. It was a frightful way; but he lifted her up, he held her, and showed her the best places on which to put her little porcelain feet; and thus they reached

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the top of the chimney, and seated themselves on the edge of it; for they were tired, which is not to be wondered at.

The heaven and all its stars were above them, and all the roofs of the town below them; they could see far around, they had such a splendid view of the world. The poor Shepherdess had never pictured it to herself thus; she leaned her little head on her Sweep, and wept so bitterly that all the gilding of her girdle came off.

"Oh, this is too much!" said she; "I cannot bear it. The world is too large. Oh, were I but again on the little table under the looking-glass! I shall never be happy till I am there again. I have followed you into the wide world; now if you really love me, you may follow me home again."

And the Chimney-sweep spoke sensibly to her, spoke to her about the old Chinese and the General-clothes-press-inspector-head-superintendent; but she sobbed so violently, and kissed her little Sweep so passionately,

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that he was obliged to give way, although it was not right to do so.

So now down they climbed again with great difficulty, crept through the flue and into the stove, where they listened behind the door, to discover if anybody was in the room. It was quite still; they peeped out, and there, on the floor, in the middle of the room, lay the old Chinese. He had fallen from the table in trying to follow the fugitives, and was broken in three pieces; his whole back was but a stump, and his head had rolled into a corner, while General-clothes-press-inspector-head-superintendent Goat-legs was standing where he had ever stood, absorbed in thought.

"How dreadful!" said the little Shepherdess. "My old grandfather is dashed to pieces, and we are the cause. I never can survive the accident." And she wrung her little hands in agony.

"He can be mended," said the Chimney-sweep; "he can easily be mended. Only do not be so hasty. If they glue his back together, and rivet his neck well, he will be

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as good as new, and will be able to say enough disagreeable things to us for some time to come."

"Do you think so?" said she; and then they clambered up again to the table on which they had stood before.

"You see," said the Sweep, "we might have spared ourselves these disagreeables, after all."

"If we had but mended my old grandfather!" said the Shepherdess. "Does it cost much?"

And mended he was. The family had his back glued, and his neck riveted, so that he was as good as new, except that he could not nod.

"Meseems, you have grown haughty since you were dashed to pieces," said General-clothes-press-inspector-head-superintendent Goat-legs. "However, I think there is not so very much to be proud of. Am I to have her, or am I not?"

Then the Chimney-sweep and the little Shepherdess looked so touchingly at the old Chinese; they were so afraid he would nod!

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But he could not, and it was disagreeable to him to tell a stranger that he constantly carried a rivet in his neck. So the little porcelain personages remained together. They blessed the old grandfather's rivet over and over again, and loved each other till they both fell to pieces.

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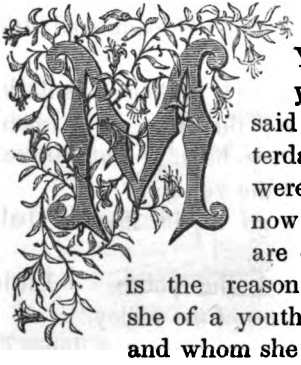
Little Ida's Flowers.



"MY poor flowers, you are wither'd!" said little Ida. "Yesterday evening you were so pretty, and now all your leaves are drooping! What is the reason of it?" asked she of a youth sitting on a sofa, and whom she liked very much, because he told her the most beautiful fairy-tales, and cut out pasteboard houses for her, and such wonderful pictures too; he could

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cut out hearts with little ladies dancing in them; flowers he could cut out, and castles with doors that would open. He was a very charming youth.

"Why do these flowers look so faded?" asked she again, showing him a withered nosegay.

"Don't you know what ails them?" answered he; "your flowers have been all night at a ball, and that's the reason they all hang their heads."

"Flowers cannot dance!" exclaimed little Ida.

"Certainly they can! When it is dark, and we are all asleep, then they dance about right merrily. They have a ball almost every night!" said the youth.

"May children go to the flowers' ball too?" asked little Ida.

"Yes," answered the youth. "Little tiny daisies, and lilies of the valley."

"Where do the prettiest flowers dance?" asked little Ida.

"Have you never been to the large castle, just outside the gates, which is the King's

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country-house, and where there is a beautiful garden with so many flowers in it? You have surely seen the swans that come swimming towards you on the lake when you throw them crumbs of bread? The flowers have regular balls there, I can tell you."

"I was in the garden yesterday with my mother," said Ida; "but there were no leaves on the trees, and I did not see a single flower. Where were they, then? There were so many of them there in summer!"

"They are in the palace now," said the youth. "As soon as the King leaves his summer-palace, and goes to town with his court, all the flowers go directly out of the garden into the palace, and make merry there, and enjoy themselves famously. If you could but see it once! The two most beautiful roses seat themselves on the throne, and play at King and Queen. Then the red cockscombs range themselves in rows on both sides, and make a low bow; these are the gentlemen of the bed-

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chamber. Then the nicest flowers enter, and the great ball begins. The blue violets are midshipmen and cadets, and they dance with hyacinths and crocuses, which they call young ladies. The tulips and great yellow lilies, they are old ladies who look on and see that the dancing goes on properly, and that all is conducted with propriety."

"But," said little Ida, quite astonished, "may the flowers give a ball in the King's palace in that way, and does nobody come in to disturb them?"

"No one in the palace knows anything about it," answered the youth. "It's true, sometimes the old inspector of the palace comes up stairs in the night with his great bunch of keys, to see if all is safe; but as soon as the flowers hear the rattling of his keys, they keep quite still, and hide themselves behind the long silken window-curtains, and peep out with their little heads. 'I smell flowers here somewhere about,' says the old inspector; but he cannot find out where they are."

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"That's very droll," said little Ida, clapping her hands. "But could I not see the flowers?"

"Of course you can see them," answered the youth. "Only peep in at the window when you go again to the palace. I looked in to-day, and I saw a long pale white lily reclining on the sofa. That was a maid of honor."

"Can the flowers in the Botanic Garden go there too?" asked she. "Are they able to go all that way?"

"Certainly, that you may believe," said the youth, "for if the flowers choose, they can fly. Have you not seen the pretty red and yellow butterflies, and the white ones too, that almost look like flowers, are in reality nothing else. They have grown on stalks, high up in the air, and then they have leave given them to jump from their stems, they move their leaves as if they were wings, and so fly about; and as they always behave well, they are allowed to flutter hither and thither by day, instead of sitting quietly on their stems, till at last real

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wings grow out of their leaves. Why, you have seen it often enough yourself. However, it may be that the flowers in the Botanic Garden did not know that there was such merry-making in the King's palace of a night, and so have never been there. But I'll tell you something that will put the Professor of Botany, who lives beside the garden, into a perplexity: when you go there again, you have only to whisper it to one flower, that there is a ball to be given at night at Friedricksburg, and one will tell it to the other till they all know it, and then all the flowers are sure to fly there. Then when the Professor comes into the garden, and does not find any of his flowers, he will not be able to comprehend what is become of them."

"Ah!" said little Ida, somewhat vexed at the strange story, "how should the flowers be able to tell each other what I say? Flowers cannot speak!"

"No, they cannot properly talk: there you are quite right," continued the youth; "but they make themselves understood by

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gestures. Have you not often seen how they bend to and fro, and nod and move all their green leaves, when there is the gentlest breeze? To them this is as intelligible as words are to us."

"Does the Professor understand their gestures, then?" said little Ida.

"To be sure he does. One morning he came into the garden and remarked that a great stinging-nettle was conversing on very intimate terms with a pretty young carnation. 'You are so beautiful,' said the nettle to the carnation, 'and I love you so devotedly!' But the Professor would not suffer any thing of the sort, and tapped the nettle on his leaves—for those are its fingers; but they stung him so that from that day forward he has never ventured to meddle with a stinging-nettle again."

"Ha! ha! ha! that was good fun indeed," laughed little Ida.

"What's the meaning of this," said the Professor of Mathematics, who had just come to pay a visit, "to tell the child such nonsense!" He could not bear the young

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man, and always scolded when he saw him cutting out pasteboard figures—as, for example, a man on the gallows with a heart in his hand, which was meant for a stealer of hearts; or an old witch riding on a broomstick, carrying her husband on the tip of her nose. The cross Professor could not bear any of these, and then he used to say as he did now, "What's the meaning of that—to teach the child such nonsense! That's your stupid Imagination, I suppose!"

But little Ida thought it was very amusing, and could not leave off thinking of what the youth had told her about the flowers. No doubt her flowers did hang their heads because they really had been to the ball yesterday. She therefore carried them to the table where all sorts of toys were nicely arranged, and in the drawer were many pretty things besides. Her doll lay in a little bed, to go to sleep; but Ida said to her, "Really, Sophie, you must get up, and be satisfied with the drawer for to-night; for the poor flowers are ill, and

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must sleep in your bed. Then perhaps they may be well by to-morrow."

So she took the doll out of bed; but the good lady did not say a single word, she only made a wry face at being obliged to leave her bed for the sake of the old flowers.

Ida laid the withered flowers in her doll's bed, covered them up with the counterpane, tucked them in very nicely, and told them to lie quite still, and in the meantime she would make some tea for them to drink, that they might be quite well by to-morrow morning. And she drew the curtains close all round the bed, so that the sun might not shine in their eyes.

The whole evening she kept on thinking of what she had heard, and just before going to bed she ran to the window where her mother's tulips and hyacinths were standing, and she whispered quite softly to them, "I know very well that you are going to the ball to-night." But the flowers seemed as if they heard nothing, and moved

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not a leaf;—but little Ida knew what she knew.

When she was in bed she lay for a long time thinking how delightful it would be to see the flowers dancing at the King's palace.

"Have my flowers really been there?" But before she could think about the answer, she had fallen asleep. She awoke again in the night; she had dreamed of the youth and the flowers, and the professor of Mathematics, who always said the youth stuffed her head with nonsense, and that she believed every thing. It was quite still in the sleeping-room; the night-lamp burnt on the table, and her father and mother were fast asleep.

"I wonder if my flowers are still in Sophie's bed!" said she. "I should like so much to know!"

She sat up in her bed, looked towards the door which was half open, and there lay the flowers and her playthings all as she had left them. She listened, and it seemed to her as if some one was playing on the

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piano in the next room, but quite softly, and yet so beautifully that she thought she had never heard the like.

"Now, then, my flowers are all dancing for certain!" said she. "Oh, how I should like to go and see them!" But she did not dare to get up, for fear of awaking her father and mother.

"If they would but come in here!" said she. But the flowers did not come, and the music continued to sound so sweetly. At last she could bear it no longer, it was so delightful—see the dance she must; so she crept noiselessly out of bed, and glided towards the door of the drawing-room. And what wonders did she behold!

The night-lamp burned no longer; and yet it was quite light in the room, because the moon shone through the window and illuminated the whole floor, so it was almost as light as day. All the hyacinths and tulips stood in two rows in the drawing-room, and before the windows was nothing but the empty flower-pots. The flowers danced figures, one round another on the

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floor; they made a regular chain and held each other by the long leaves.

At the piano sat a large yellow lily, that Ida thought she had seen before; for she remembered that the youth had once told her that this lily was like Miss Laura, and that every body had laughed at him for saying so. Now, it seemed to her that the tall lily really was like the young lady, and that she had quite the same manners when she played; for now she bent her long sallow face first on one side and then on the other, and nodded with her head to keep time; Ida stood looking in upon them, but not one of them observed her.

Now a large blue crocus sprang upon the table where Ida's toys were lying, went straight to the bed, and drew aside the curtains. There lay the sick flowers; but they got up directly and saluted the other flowers, who begged them to join the dance. The old snapdragon, whose under lip was broken off, stood up and bowed to the pretty flowers. The sick flowers really did get up

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looked no longer ill, and danced merrily with the rest.

Suddenly a dull sound was heard, as if something had fallen from the table. Ida cast her eyes in that direction, and saw that it was the Easter-wand she had found lying on her bed one shrovetide morning, and which now wanted to be looked upon as a flower. It was indeed a charming rod; for at the top a little wax figure was hidden, with a broad-brimmed hat on like the Professor: and it was tied with red and blue ribands. So it hopped about among the flowers, and stamped away right merrily with its feet; for it was the mazourka that it was dancing, and this the flowers could not dance, for they were much too light-footed.

All at once the wax figure in the rod became a tall and stout giant, and cried out with a loud voice, "What's the meaning of this—to teach the child such nonsense! But this is your stupid Imagination, I suppose!" And now the doll grew just like the Professor, and looked as yellow and

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cross as he did: they were as like as two peas. But the paper flowers with which the rod was ornamented pinched his thin lanky legs, and then he shrunk together and was a tiny wax doll again.

Little Ida thought this scene so funny that she burst out a laughing, which, however, the company did not remark; for the rod kept on stamping, till at last the Professor of Mathematics was obliged to dance too, whether he made himself stout or thin, big or little, he was forced to keep on, till at last the flowers begged for him, and the rod then left him in peace.

A loud knocking was now heard in the drawer where the doll lay; and with this the snap-dragon run up to the corner of the table and opened the drawer a little. It was Sophie, who, putting out her head, looked around quite astonished:

"Is there a ball here?" said she "why was I not told of it?"

"Will you dance with me?" said the nutcrackers.

"A fine sort of person indeed to dance

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with!" said Sophie, turning her back on him. She seated herself on the drawer, and thought that some one of the flowers would certainly come and engage her to dance. But no one came. So she coughed a little: "A-hem! a-hem!" Still none came. Then the nutcrackers began dancing alone, and he performed his steps by no means badly.

When Sophie saw that not one of the flowers came to offer himself as partner, she suddenly slipped down on the floor, so that there was a terrible fuss, and all the flowers came running up and gathered around her to inquire if she had hurt or bruised herself. She was not hurt at all; but all the flowers were very complaisant, particularly those belonging to Ida, who took this opportunity to thank her for the nice bed in which they had slept so quietly; and then they paid her so much attention and they took her by the hand, and led her to the dance, while all the other flowers stood round in a circle. Sophie was now quite happy, and begged Ida's flowers to make use of her bed after

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the ball, as she, for her part, did not at all mind sleeping one night in the drawer.

But the flowers said: "We are very much obliged to you indeed; but we shall not live so long, for to-morrow we shall be quite withered. But now tell little Ida that she must bury us down in her garden near her canary-bird; there we shall appear again next summer, and grow more beautiful than we were this year."

"No, you shall not die!" continued Sophie vehemently, kissing the flowers.

Suddenly the door of the drawing-room opened, and a great crowd of beautiful flowers came dancing in. Ida could not comprehend where these flowers came from, unless they were the flowers from the King's pleasure-grounds. First of all entered two magnificent roses with golden crowns on, they were a King and a Queen; and then followed stocks and pinks bowing on every side. They had too a band of music with them: large poppies and peonies blew upon peashells till they were red in the face, and lilies of the valley and blue-

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bells joined their tinkling sounds, and rung as if they were musical bells. It was charming music.

Then came a crowd of the most various flowers, all dancing,—violets, daisies, convolvuluses, hyacinths; and they all moved and turned about so prettily, and kissed one another, that it was quite a charming sight.

At last the happy flowers wished each other good night; and now little Ida slipped into the bed again, and dreamed of all the splendid things she had just beheld.

The following morning, as soon as she was up and dressed, she went to the table where her playthings were, to see if her flowers were still there. She drew the bed-curtains aside, and—yes! the flowers were there, but they were much more withered than they were yesterday. Sophie, too, was in the drawer, but she looked dreadfully sleepy.

"Can't you remember what you had to say to me?" asked little Ida. Sophie, how-

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ever, only looked very stupid, and did not answer a word.

"You are not at all good," said Ida, "and yet all the flowers asked you to dance with them."

Then she chose a little box of pasteboard from among her playthings; it was painted with birds, and in it she laid the withered flowers."

"That shall be your coffin," she said; "and when my cousins from Norway come to see me, they shall go to your funeral in the garden; so that next summer you may bloom again, and grow more beautiful than you were this year."

The cousins from Norway were two merry boys, Jonas and Esben. Their father had just made each of them a present of a bow and arrows, which they brought with them to show to Ida. She told them all about the poor flowers that were dead, and that she was going to bury in the garden. The two boys went before with the bows on their shoulders, and little Ida followed with the dead flowers in the pretty little

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box. A grave was dug in the garden. Ida kissed the flowers once more, put the box into the earth, and Jonas and Esben shot over the grave with their bows, for they had no guns or cannons.

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The Daisy.

NOW LISTEN!

OUT in the country, close to the road-side, there stands a country house. I am sure you have often seen it; in front there is a little flower-garden, enclosed by white palisades with the points painted green. Close by,

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on a bank outside the palings, amid the most beautiful grass, grew a little Daisy; the sun shone on it just as bright and warm as on the splendid flowers in the garden, and so each hour it grew in strength and beauty. One morning, there it stood full blown, with its delicate white glistening leaves, which encircled the little yellow sun in the middle like rays of light.

It never once occurred to the little flower that it was seen by nobody, hidden as it was down there in the grass, and that it was a poor despised flower! No, nothing of the kind!

It was so contented! It turned towards the warm sun, gazed upon it, and listened to the lark that was singing in the air.

The little Daisy was so happy! as happy as though it had been a great holiday; and yet it was only a Monday. The children were in school; and while they sat there on their forms and learned their lessons, the little flower sat on its green stem, and also learned, from the warm sun and from all around, how good God is; and it was just

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as if the lark uttered all this in its song, beautifully and distinctly, while the flower felt it in silence. And the flower looked up with a sort of reverence to the happy bird that could sing and fly, but it was not dejected at being itself unable to do the same.

"Do I not see and hear?" thought the Daisy; "the sun shines on me, and the breeze kisses me,—oh, what rich gifts do I enjoy!"

Within the palisading of the garden stood many stiff stately flowers: the less fragrance they had, the higher they held their heads. The peonies puffed themselves out, in order to make themselves larger than the roses; but it is not always the size that will avail any thing. The tulips were of the most beautiful colors; they knew that very well, and held themselves as straight as an arrow, so that they might be seen all the better. They did not deign to cast a look on the little Daisy-flower outside; but the flower looked at them so much the more, and thought, "How rich and beautiful those

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are! Yes, to be sure, the beautiful bird certainly flies down to them—them he surely visits! What happiness to have got a place so near, whence I can see all this splendor." And just as it was thinking so,—"*quirre-vit!*" down came the lark from on high; but it did not go to the peonies or tulips; no, but down into the grass to the poor little Daisy, which for pure joy was so astonished that it did not even know what it should think.

The little bird hopped about in the grass and sang: "Well! how soft the grass is! and only look, what a sweet little flower with a golden heart and with a robe of silver!" For the yellow spot in the Daisy looked really just like gold, and the little leaves around were shining, and as white as silver.

How happy the little Daisy was! no one could believe it. The bird kissed her with his beak, sang to her, and then flew up again in the blue air. It was certainly a whole quarter of an hour before the Daisy came to herself again. Half ashamed, and

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yet so glad at heart, she looked at the flowers over in the garden: they had beheld the honor and the happiness that had befallen her; they would surely comprehend, she thought, what a joy it was to her; but there stood the tulips as stiff again as before, looking quite prim, and they were, too, quite red in the face; for they were vexed. But the peonies looked so thick-headed! ah! it was a good thing they could not speak, otherwise the Daisy would have heard a fine speech. The poor little flower, however, could see very plainly that they were not in a good humor, and she was heartily sorry for it. At this moment a maiden came into the garden with a knife in her hand, sharp and polished; she went among the tulips, and cut off one after the other.

"Ah!" sighed the little Daisy, "this is really terrible; now it is all over with them."

Then the girl with the tulips went away. The Daisy was glad that it was standing out there in the grass, and was but a poor

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little flower;—it was quite thankful: and when the sun set, it folded its leaves, went to sleep, and dreamed the whole night of the Sun and the beautiful bird.

On the following morning, when the flower, fresh and joyful, again stretched out its white leaves, like little arms, into the bright sunshine and clear blue air, it recognized the voice of the bird; but what he sung was so melancholy! Yes, the poor lark had good reason to be sad: he had been taken prisoner, and was now sitting in a cage, close to an open window in the pleasure-house. He sang of the joy of being able to fly about in freedom, sang of the young green corn in the field, and of the beautiful journeyings which he used to make on his wings, high up in the free air. The poor bird was heavy of heart: there he sat a captive in a narrow cage.

The little Daisy would so gladly have helped him; but how to begin, yes, that was the difficulty. In sympathizing with the lark, it forgot entirely how beautiful was every thing around it, how warm the sun

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shone, and how beautifully white its own leaves glistened:—oh! it could only think on the imprisoned bird, for whom it was incapable of doing any thing.

Then suddenly there came two little boys out of the garden, and one of them had a knife in his hand, large and sharp, like that with which the girl had cut the tulips. They came straight towards the little Daisy, who could not imagine what they wanted.

"Here we can cut a nice piece of turf for the lark," said one of the boys, and began to cut out a square all around the Daisy, so that the flower stood in the very middle of it.

"Pull up the flower," said one boy; and the Daisy trembled for very fear; for to be pulled up, why that was to die, and it wished to live, as it was to be put with the turf into the cage of the imprisoned lark.

"No, let it stay," said the other boy; "it looks so pretty." And so it remained, and was put into the cage with the lark.

But the poor bird bewailed loudly his

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lost freedom, and fluttered against the iron wires of the cage. The little flower could not speak, could not say one consoling word to him, much as she wished to do so. Thus passed the whole forenoon.

"There is no water here," said the imprisoned lark; "they are all gone out, and have forgotten me. Not a drop of water to drink! my throat is dry and burning! within me is fire and ice, and the air is so heavy! Oh, I shall die; I must leave the warm sunshine, and the fresh green trees, and all the beautiful things that God has created!" And saying these words, he pressed his beak into the cool piece of turf to refresh himself a little; and his eye fell on the Daisy, and the bird nodded to it and kissed it, and said: "You also must wither here, you poor little flower; you and the green turf here have been given me instead of the whole world, which I had out there! Every little blade of grass must be to me as a green tree, every one of your white leaves a fragrant flower. Ah, you only remind me how much I have lost!"

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"What can I do to comfort him?" thought the little flower; but she could not move a leaf; yet the fragrance which streamed from her delicate leaves was much stronger than is usual with this flower. The bird observed this; and although he was dying of thirst, and tore up every green blade of grass in his suffering, yet he did not even touch the little Daisy.

It was evening, and no one came as yet to bring the poor bird a drop of water: he stretched out his delicate wings, and fluttertered convulsively; his song was a complaining chirp. His little head bowed down towards the Daisy, and the heart of the bird broke for thirst and longing.

Then the flower was not able as on the evening before, to fold its leaves together and sleep; it bowed down ill and sorrowful to the earth.

It was not until the next morning that the boys came back; and when they saw that the bird was dead, they wept many tears, and dug for it a pretty grave, which they decked with flowers. The dead body

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of the bird was put in a beautiful red paper box;—he was to be buried royally, the poor bird! While he lived and sang, they forgot him, let him sit in a cage and suffer want; now they showed him great honor and lamented him.

But the bit of turf with the Daisy was thrown out into the dust of the highway; no one thought of her, who, however, had felt most for the little bird, and had wished so much to comfort him.

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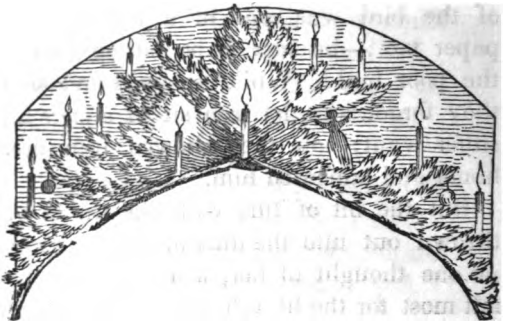

New Year's Eve.

[These touching stanzas are a translation, or rather adaptation, of Andersen's story of the "Little Match Girl." They were originally published in the Boston Transcript.]

LITTLE Gretchen, little Gretchen,
Wanders up and down the street,
The snow is on her yellow hair,
The frost is on her feet.

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New Year's Eve.

The rows of long dark houses,
  Without look cold and damp,
By the struggling of the moonbeam,
  By the flicker of the lamp.

The clouds ride fast as horses
  The wind is from the north;
But no one cares for Gretchen,
  And no one looketh forth.

Within those dark damp houses
  Are merry faces bright,
And happy hearts are watching out
  The old year's latest night.

The board is spread with plenty,
  Where the smiling kindred meet,
But the frost is on the pavement,
  And the beggars in the street.

With the little box of matches,
  She could not sell all day,
And the thin, thin tattered mantle,
  The wind blows every way.

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New Year's Eve.

She clingeth to the railing,
  She shivers in the gloom,—
There are parents sitting snugly
  By firelight in the room:

And groups of busy children,
  Withdrawing just the tips
Of rosy fingers pressed in vain
  Against their burning lips;

With grave and earnest faces,
  Are whispering each other,
Of presents for the new year, made
  For father or for mother.

But no one talks to Gretchen,
  And no one hears her speak,
No breath of little whisperers
  Comes warmly to her cheek:

No little arms are round her,
  Ah me! that there should be
With so much happiness on earth,
  So much of misery.

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New Year's Eve.

Sure they of many blessings,
  Should scatter blessings round,
As laden boughs in Autumn fling
  Their ripe fruits to the ground.

And the best love man can offer
  To the God of love, be sure,
Is kindness to his little ones,
  And bounty to his poor.

Little Gretchen, little Gretchen
  Goes coldly on her way;
There's no one looketh out at her,
  There's no one bids her stay.

Her home is cold and desolate,
  No smile, no food, no fire;
But children clamorous for bread,
  And an impatient sire.

So she sits down in an angle,
  Where two great houses meet,
And she curleth up beneath her,
  For warmth, her little feet.

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New Year's Eve.

And she looketh on the cold wall,
  And on the colder sky,
And wonders if the little stars
  Are bright fires up on high.

She heard a clock strike slowly,
  Up in a far church tower,
With such a sad and solemn tone,
  Telling the midnight hour.

Then all the bells together,
  Their merry music poured;
They were ringing in the feast,
  The circumcision of the Lord.

And she thought as she sat lonely,
  And listened to the chime,
Of wondrous things that she had loved
  To hear in the olden time.

And she remembered her of tales,
  Her mother used to tell,
And the cradle songs she sang,
  When summer's twilight fell.

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Of good men and of angels,
  And of the Holy Child,
Who was cradled in a manger,
  When winter was most wild.

Who was poor, and cold, and hungry,
  And desolate and lone;
And she thought the song had told,
  He was ever with his own.

And all the poor and hungry,
  And forsaken ones are his:
"How good of him to look on me,
  In such a place as this."

Colder it grows and colder,
  But she does not feel it now,
For the pressure at her heart,
  And the weight upon her brow.

But she struck one little match
  On the wall so cold and bare,
That she might look around her,
  And see if He were there.

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New Year's Eve.

The single match has kindled,
  And by the light it threw,
It seemed to little Gretchen,
  The wall was rent in two.

And she could see the room within,
  The room all warm and bright,
With the fire-glow red, and dusky,
  And the tapers all alight.

And there were kindred gathered,
  Round the table richly spread,
With heaps of goodly viands,
  Red wine and pleasant bread.

She could smell the fragrant savor,
  She could hear what they did say,
Then all was darkness once again,
  The match had burned away.

She struck another hastily,
  And now she seemed to see,
Within the same warm chamber,
  A glorious Christmas tree.

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New Year's Eve.

The branches were all laden
  With such things as children prize,
Bright gift for boy and maiden,
  She saw them with her eyes.

And she almost seemed to touch them,
  And to join the welcome shout;
When darkness fell around her,
  For the little match was out.

Another, yet another, she
  Has tried, they will not light,
Till all her little store she took,
  And struck with all her might.

And the whole miserable place
  Was lighted with the glare,
And lo, there hung a little child
  Before her in the air.

There were blood-drops on his forehead,
  And a spear-wound in his side,
And cruel nail-prints in his feet,
  And in his hands spread wide.

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And he looked upon her gently,
  And she felt that he had known
Pain, hunger, cold, and sorrow,
  Ay, equal to her own.

And he pointed to the laden board,
  And to the Christmas tree,
Then up to the cold sky, and said,
  "Will Gretchen come with me?"

The poor child felt her pulses fail,
  She felt her eyeballs swim,
And a ringing sound was in her ears,
  Like her dead mother's hymn.

And she folded both her thin white hands.
  And turned from that bright board,
And from the golden gifts, and said,
  "With Thee, with Thee, O Lord."

The chilly winter morning
  Breaks up in the dull skies,
On the city wrapt in vapor,
  On the spot where Gretchen lies.

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New Year's Eve.

The night was wild and stormy,
  The morn is cold and gray,
And good church bells are ringing,
  Christ's circumcision day.

And holy men were praying
  In many a holy place;
And little children's angels
  Sing songs before his face.

In her scant and tattered garment,
  With her back against the wall;
She sitteth cold and rigid,
  She answers not their call;

They have lifted her up fearfully,
  They shuddered as they said,
"It was a bitter, bitter night,
  The child is frozen dead."

The angels sang their greeting,
  For one more redeemed from sin;
Men said, "It was a bitter night,
  Would no one let her in?"

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And they shuddered as they spoke of her,
  And sighed; they could not see,
How much of happiness there was,
  With so much misery.

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